SCRIPTURE TRUTH

Confirmed and cleared

BY

Some great appearances of God for His Church under the New Testament held forth

With some special Remarks thereon.

From her first rise & planting amongst the Nations, and that blessed recovery of late from Antichristian darkness, even to these times.

By a Minister of the Gospel.

NUMB. XXIII: Vers. 23.
According to this time it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, what hath God wrought?

PSALM LXXV: Vers. 1.
That His Name is neer, his wondrous workes declare.

REVELAT. XV: Vers. 3.
Great and marvelous are Thy workes, Lord God Almighty, just and true are Thy wayes, Thou King of Saints.

Printed in the Year 1678.

EPISTLE
To the
CHRISTIAN READER.

READER,

THey are well, and at a bleſſed advantage in ſuch trying and winowing times we are fallen in, whoſe great ſtudy is to make peace with God, and underſtand eir way where it lyes, & upon what ſecurity they venture, when dark clouds are ſo remarkeably caſt-gup, and all ſenſible grounds almoſt ſhaken, ſo as e life of faith ſeemes now in another manner the hriſtians trial, how to be at reſt & fully quiet upon e truth and faithfulneſs of God, I muſt ſay than in y former dayes, that we, or our Fathers have own, ſince the begun riſe, and recovery of the urch from Antichriſtianiſme; & should not this ly er, as the greateſt intereſt men can have to be taken with, that their ancker is ſure, and caſt within the l, & to know whom they have believed, when the louſy of a highly provoked God is now ready to rſt forth, and great wrath ſeemes to be on this neration; when a ſtrong & hot battel may be look-l for to be yet before the reformed Churches, and

very near; yea ſuch times, when there may be *nō peace to him that goes out and comes in*: But to theſe, theſe only, whoſe peace is above all ſuch ſtormes, as knowing the rock they found on is God, that the great things of the everlaſting Goſpel are aſſuredly true, and the teſtimony of the Word, whereon he hath *cauſed them to hope* to be ſuch, as can make it ſweet and eaſy to roll the whole of their intereſt thereon, not only for what doth concerne them within time, but an eternity of glory to come. with ſome reſpect to this; and I may ſay, under ſome weight of this *Subject*, is this ſmall treatiſe offered to your ſerious peruſal, being a brief touch of theſe *great & marvelous things, which the Lord hath done for his Church under the New Teſtament*; O that with a bleſſing from him therewith, it might be a *word in ſeaſon* to any, and a helper to their joy, and ſtrengthening in the truth.

It is clear, that the works of the Lord, and theſe marvelous things he did in the ſight of our Fathers for confirming the truth, is a weighty talent and truſt, we ſtand this day accountable for. 1. For being more ſtrengthened in his way, ſince it is there, *his Name is neer*. 2. To obſerve, & make a *diligent ſearch* thereanent, *for they are great, and ſought out of all that take pleaſure therein*, *Pſal.* 111. *verſ.* 2. Yea whilſt we are under ſo preſſing a call thus to come, & ſee the Lords being God; *whoſe work is honourable and glorious, and his righteouſneſs endureth*

dureth for ever, *Vers.* 3. 3. To keep up the remembrance thereof, that *one generation may praise his works to another*, and not lose sight of the great wonders of former ages, and those events of providence about the Church, so famous, publick, and of such unanswverable evidence, though nowv many generations past, as even to this day might be, as if they were present in our sight, and as continued vvonder before us. Yea I must say, it seemes to be a peculiar guilt, and controversy, which the holy God hath with the present generation, when there is no suitable regarding his works, nor calling to mind his powver & judgments of old, but so visible a tempting of him upon every new step of our trial. 4. And should not this cause a further vveight & impression of such a duty on us, *that we may give unto the Lord the glory of his works*, & wonders done in times past, and for putting to our *seal* to that glorious administration of providence under the Mediators hand, about his Church under the Gospel, who alone was found worthy to loose that *sealed Book*, and *hath done all things well*: that his work is perfect, and in a great part now wrought forth in the event before our eyes; with such marvelous things, which in their appointed time and season, have been made known, as should never have entered into mens thoughts, if they had not been foretold in the Scripture; So as a greater trust now falleth under our hand, than to those

who lived in former ages. O how ſweet should a ſerious aime be at this, for each in their ſeveral capacities to be thus concerned, how to advance the repute and credit of the Truth of Chriſt; and make known to the ſons of men *his mighty acts*, *and the glorious Majeſty of his Kingdome under the New Teſtament*.

Though the Churches ſtate and condition, ſince that bleſſed reſtoration after the fall hath been ſtill militant upon the earth, yet we may ſee the *Croſs* with ſome further meaſure of sharp and ſearching trialls have a more peculiar reſpect to the diſpenſation of the Goſpel, and remarkeably ſuted thereto, to goe through much *Tribulation*, than it was to thoſe times under the *Law*; yea thus ſome aſtonishing, and more continued aſſaults, than was known to the ancient Church, as conſentaneous to a greater manifeſtation of grace, and higher degrees of light. But here alſo how ſweet and confirming a proſpect may we have of the way of the Lord, which this preſent eſſay does point at, I hope with ſome clearneſs. 1. That neither *Greece* nor *Rome*, whoſe conqueſts were once ſpread through moſt of the *Nations*, did ever know ſuch triumphs as the Truth, and Doctrine of Chriſt hath had in thoſe times of greateſt ſufferings and perſecution, both over the pagan and Antichriſtian world, over the thrones of Kingdomes, as well as the meaneſt cottages; yea how this hath made the earth to tremble, and the

nations

nations shake in their day. 2. What rare examples of holineſs, & of the marvelous power of the Truth (yea theſe not a few, but innumerable) we thus have in our ſight, who did both burne, and shine (though with borrowed light from their bleſſed head) and with ſo bright a luſtre in the darkeſt night of the Churches ſufferings, as all might ſee the *Spirit of God and of Glory did reſt upon them*; yea thus may have a more convincing view of the glory of the Church militant, if they would but come neer, and conſider this ſtrange ſight, what hath been her ſtate under the Goſpel, *the bush burning and not conſumed*, and what was ſaid of Joſeph in the type, *how his bow did abide in ſtrength*, amidſt ſuch amazing and renewed conflicts. 3. That the recovery of Chriſtianity from Antichriſtian darkneſs is ſuch, as hath no leſs demonſtrative evidence of the immediat power of God, and his outſtretched arme, yea moſt aſtonishing ſigns and witneſs of an extraordinary providence therewith, than the firſt ſpreading thereof amongſt the Nations. And though it is not now a time of miracles in that manner, as in the dayes of the Apoſtles, yet hath theſe been times of the great wonders of the Goſpel, as in many inſtances may be convincingly evident if men do not shut their eyes thereat.

For what paſſages are here inſert, I may with confidence ſay, there hath been ſome ſerious enquiry made, and a being not eaſily ſatisfied anent the

Certainty thereof, from the graveſt both of *ancient* and *Moderne Hiſtories*, and to have ſuch evidences of their Truth as might be to the furtheſt convincing, to one who was under ſome preſſure on his own Spirit for a clear quieting perſwaſion hereof, no leſs than to ſatisfy others. O What it is to be perſwaded of the realitie of the Goſpel, to know and be ſure, that when this *earthly tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we have a building in Heaven eternal, that is not made with hands*, ſince to be a Chriſtian in earneſt, and have an aime to follow the Lord fully now in ſuch remarkeably dark and ſearching times? Does indiſpenſibly call for ſome higher degrees of aſſurance and eſtabliſhment, than ſeems by moſt to be underſtood; It is not eaſy ſometimes for the moſt eſtabliſhed to be kept from fainting in the way to their Countrey, ſuch may be the preſſure of affliction, and multiplied temptations, and ſo dark an hour on their ſoul, to bring in queſtion, what with greateſt aſſurance they once knew, and with humble confidence could bring in before the Lord, as his own ſeal; yea a few dayes may come the Churches way, more remarkeable for trial, than almoſt an age before. It it ſure the furtheſt length in being confirmed in the way of the Lord, and of a ſolide eſtabliſhment in the truth, was never more preſſingly called for; yet how rare a ſight ſeems this to be in the dayes we live in. Some things may ſeeme ſtrange, which I have been put to think

on

with astonishment. 1. That the measure of
ht, and these confirmations of the Truth given
to this generation, doth so far exceed the mea-
re of former times; yet seems it to be the peculiar
ault suted to this age, wherein the power of dark-
s does most appear, *that prodigy of Atheisme*;
how far many have lost all persuasion of the
th, & makes it their work to resolve their faith in
uncertainty of any Principles. 2. That judicial
dency the light & knowledge of most now seem
have, for a further deading of their conscience, &
ere its true and native fruit should be to humble
abase, how rare this is, but to the contrair ef-
t, to swell and puffe up, and what an ordina-
way of converse have most learned, with the
eatest Truths of the Scripture, as if there were
more but to make these a sport of wit and inventi-
, in their debatings thereanent, which could not
possibly consistent with an awful regard, and
swasion of its being the word of the living God
their souls being under the power and Authori-
thereof; yea none more found beyond the
ch of conviction, and the aw of light further off
ir Conscience, than many who have been once
ghtned. 3. How men should live at such distance
h these great things that are so shortly to come
asse, as an *eternal state, & resurrection of the dead*,
ich could not but enforce some converse there-
th in another manner, to have them more present

and as ſtill in our ſight, if they were truely believed. Oh! if Chriſtians were ſuch a length in their being confirmed in the Truth, which they are called to ſeek after, the greateſt ſtrait & tryal even in times of heavineſs otherwiſe, then would be to bear their joy and comfort, which that marvelous change they ſhall ere long know & enjoy of an eternal Glory could not but cauſe. 4. And can ſerious godlineſs be conceiveable in its exerciſe, without deep and ſolid impreſſions of the certainty of divine Truth, when this is ſo neceſſarily conjoined with a being kept in the love of God, and under a bleſſed conſtraint thereof; thus a reſignation of their whole intereſts to him, is made ſweet and eaſy, ſo as to know they can never make ſo much of any wordly enjoyment, as by an offering up, and reſigning it to his bleſſed call. Yea is thus made comforting to endure & though *hope deferred may make the heart ſick*, yet are they then kept unshaken with ſuch a quieting aſſurance of the Truth, that though it pleaſeth us beſt when the returns of prayer make haſte; yet ſince they know it gives more Glory to God, when he delayes moſt, to have a ſweet complacency therewith. If *Job's* trial had been ſooner at a cloſe, it might have been more his perſonal eaſe, but not more for the Lords honour; no mercy hath ever been more endeared, than what hath broke out of the midſt of the thickeſt cloud, or more full and ſweet, than what hath come after much Patience, and continued wreſtlings. I muſt

I must further adde, as to some peculiar improvement of these passages here recorded, how a rious Reader may find these truths both confirmg and sweet, which convincingly are preted before him. 1. That the most rare expeences of the Saints, and their sharpest trials ve so usually mett, and these the sweetest disensations, which would have been most cross their own choice; Yea have seemed most dgment like to ordinary Observers. 2. That is sure there are discoveries of the truth nown to the Saints in times of suffering, which e unconceiveable to any at a distance. O how e World would wonder, if they understood hat these knew, and have been then admitted to joy. 3. How the continuance and preservation f the Church in all the times of the Gospel is such, is peculiar to her alone, and can be said of no inrest or party else; which hath borne out such great volutions, as have most changed the face of the orld; and these almost universal deluges of *aganisme*, *Arrianisme*, and *Antichristianisme*, hich like an inundation did for a time goe over her ad. 4. Though the dispensations of the Lord have wonderful deepness, and but a little thereof can reached, whilst sin and mortality stand in the ay; yet we may see here, how *patience* can make outgate break up before a deliverance, and tribution for the Gospel to be one of the Saints priviledges,

ledges, which hath a peculiar rent and intereſt ly-
ing to it; that ſuch have griefs and comforts the
World is a ſtranger to; yea how that meaſure o
trial, grief or pain did meet none of his people i
his way, which the Spirit of the Lord hath no
made eaſy to endure, and to be comforted therein.
5. How ſuch hath been the caſe and preſſure oft o
the Saints under their ſufferings, as may demonſtra-
tively witneſs, it muſt be ſome ſtrong conſolation, &
no ſhadow that could thus ſupport them, under th
ſame, when no viſible cauſe was for it. 6. Tha
when the Lord calles his own quickly away, there
is ſome diſcerneable grovvth then uſually previou
thereto, and a reaping of an early harveſt may b
ſeen. 7. That it is not by might & power but an im-
mediat out powring of the Spirit, which can in
fevv years bring more forvvard, than many age
could undoe; as in that bleſſed recovery of the Church
from Popery might be convincing to all. 8. And
have vve not here a demonſtrative vvitneſs of the
reality of that ſtate above, whither ſuch a bleſſed
company are entred, & knowes novv what it is to b
there, vvhen the fore thoughts thereof, and thes
ſenſible glaunces they got of that land vvhither
they vvere going, vvas ſuch, as ſvvallovved up
theſe impreſſions, that their imbittering pain and
torments could not but have left on them; O
vvhat they novv enjoy, and vvhat change is a Chri-
ſtian to undergoe vvhen Death comes, as it ſhould

not

ot be strange though these long to be gone to that nconceiveable, svveet and delightful Paradise, vhich is above, vvho ever knevv in themselves e truth thereof sealed by the earnest of the pirit. 9. It is thus vve see, hovv the Lord ath made good his word to the Church, in a ost strange and vvonderful vvay; so as nothing therto hath failed of the Prophecies of the New estament, but may be now read in the event; yea ese things brought forth in their appointed time nd proper circumstances, as they were expresly retold; when no influence of second causes in e remotest tendency thereto, could possibly be scerned; such as the greatest Atheists may see, th not come to pass at an adventure, or in an ordir way of providence.

I judged it dutie (and hopes it may not be und unseasonable) to give some brief touch also the present state of the Church of Christ in *Scotnd*; & to bear witness to so great and weighty an terest on which the sufferings of his people there e remarkeablie stated at this day; having been surised to have found how little this was understood many, who vvants not otherwayes a serious reect to the truth, and desire to be concerned in the hurches case there.

Though extraordinar & immediat revelations, must ot now be looked after, but the Lords fixed and stablished way under the times of the Gospel, to ommunicat light & give answers to his people, is by these

theſe living oracles of the Scripture, and that it is ſure the truth and authoritie of God there, is the alone formal object of his peoples faith; yet it cannot be denyed, nor be ſtrange, that he hath been pleaſed to reveal unto ſome of his Servants, even in theſe late times in a more extraordinary way, things that were to come; eſpecially in a ſuffering condition, and when ſome ſpecial ſervice & neceſſitie of the Church did the more call for it. If an Angel from Heaven, much more men, ſhould bring any light or diſcovery of things contrare to the Scripture, or offer to adde any thing to that perfect rule; they were to be accurſed. But what in ſome ſingular paſſages here inſert, as I have elſe where upon ſuch account endeavoured to clear; we may ſee how theſe great Servants of Chriſt were led in no other path than that of the written Word, though they had ſome more extraordinar and immediat imbreathings of Gods mind, as to the application thereof in particular caſes, and with reſpect to that part of the Church where they lived, which alſo with greateſt caution, & much humble ſobriety they did own. Nor is it ſtrange, that ſuch confirmations from the Lord given in to ſome of his Servants are ſo rare now, whilſt the ancient Holineſs of theſe dayes is ſo little known, & what it is to believe, and follow the Lord fully, with cloſs keeping by light, which theſe made their continued ſtudy.

I have aimed as far as the expreſſing the matter with ſome plaineſs could poſſibly admit, to prevent unneceſſar multiplying of words, or encroach on your time that way, & I hope, the ſubject being ſo grave and weighty may obleige the Reader to ſome ſerious intertaining thereof. It is a great thing to diſcerne the work of God a right, & what a marvelous ſeal is in every age given in to the truth, to ſee how all theſe lines of providence, & moſt aſtoniſhing revolutions, which have gone over the Church, does ſo convincingly lead into the Scripture, and to the Chriſtians further eſtabliſhment.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

CHAP. I.

THE truth of the *Messia's* being revealed, and assuredly come and what great things we are thus called to converse with, *Sect.* 1, 2. at fulness of evidence is therewith of its certainty, considered. *Sect* 3. e remarkeable time of his coming. *Sect.* 4. The demonstrative certainty, with some special Remarks thereon. 1. Of the gift of tongues *Sect.* 6. that marvelous effusion of the Holy Ghost then to the Church *Sect.* 7: the drawing power of the Gospel to bring in the Nations. *Sect.* 8. that amazing stroake upon the Jewish Nation. *Sect.* 9. Of the fall and ssing of the Heathen Oracles. *Sect.* 10. Of that confession the Devils re then enforced to give to the truth. *Sect.* 11. That opposition of Satan n by some lying wonders to the truth of the Gospel *Sect.* 12. A breang time was a little to the Church before the hot persecution came. *Sect.* . How the first sharpe assault began under *Nero Sect.* 14. That nderful way the Christian Church was brought in amongst the Gentils. 2. 15. Some great and remarkeable providences in these first times for nfirming and promoving of the Gospel, considered in *Sect.* 16, 17, 18, , 20, 21. The Lords marvelous way of the preserving and spreading Scripture of the N. Testament, and of such innumerable Copies thereof. yond the possibility of hazard. *Sect.* 22. How we may see a most remarble providence in so dark an account which is now of the first two Cenies. *Sect.* 23. The Sanctity of the primitive Christians, and convincing lity thereof, held forth. *Sect.* 24.

CHAP. II. That marvelous providence in the calling of *Constantine*. d breaking of the heathen Empire, with some special remarks thereon. 1. The short breathing and rest the Church then got. *Sect.* 2. That azing deludge of Arrianisme, and extraordinary judgments on the eat Promoters thereof. *Sect.* 3, 4. Of *Julian* the Apostate, and conncing need the Church then had of such a sharp conflict. *Sect.* 5. That rvelous appearance of the Lord against his attempt ro rebuild the wish Temple *Sect.* 6. Some great providences further for confirming truth held forth. *Sect.* 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. The short lives of the choicest nperours in these declining times of the Church. *Sect.* 12. That signal ovidence in the whole of the Scriptures being so publick and secured, th in the Easterne and Westerne Churches, before Antichrists appearing. 13. Some strange signes before his appearance, with the time and nner thereof. *Sect.* 14, 15. What followed thereon to the World, with ne singular providences for his discovery, held forth. *Sect.* 16, 17, 18, 19. estate of the true Church then in the wilderness, with the Lords marlous appearance for her. *Sect.* 20, 21. That rare victory the truth got in e testimony and sufferings of *John Hus*, and *Jerome of Prague*, with what range things followed thereon. *Sect.* 22. How the rise of Antichrist, & lahumetisme, did at one and the same time meet, with some confirming marks upon this strange adversary. *Sect.* 23, 14, 25. That strange pro-

digy

digy of bloody crosses through *Germany* before the Reformation, con
dered. *Sect* 26. Some remarkeable providences which did go before,
make way for that blessed time. *Sect.* 27.

CHAP. III. The time of the breaking up of that glorious work
God in the Reformation and delivery of the Church from Antichrist
darkness. *Sect.* 1; What opposition it met with. *Sect* 2. That univer
calme was for a little then in Europe. *Sect* 3. The extraordinar calli
of Instruments. *Sect.* 4. How no outward inducements such had for the
work. *Sect.* 5. That a special providence in the Popes indulgences givi
such a rise for his seal. *Sect.* 6. That visible triumph the truth then h
upon the publick appearance of Adversaries against it, *Sect.* 7. What t
Popish cruelty is, & hath been against the Saints in these late times, *Sect.*
The Churches growth by greatest opposition thereto, *Sect.* 9. What a s
lemne witness hath been to the truth in such places, where Popery is
most prevalent, *Sect.* 10. Some remarkeable assaults which was then
gainst the truth for her further victory, *Sect.* 11, 12.

CHAP. IV. How the Lords way in the planting and establishing t
Reformed Churches in these late times, hath been extraordinar & in so
measure visibly miraculous upon several grounds considered and clea
through the whole of this *Chapter*, with some special instances of the s
ferings of the Saints then, and their marvelous joy, and resolution there
and how demonstratively this was above nature.

CHAP. V. Some notable and convincing instances of the death
several choice persons in *Germany* and in the Church of *Scotland*, and wh
marvelous peace & joy they found; yea extraordinar glances which so
of these then had of the state they were entering into, to confirme the P
testant cause, and the truth and reality of godliness; held forth in the fo
lowing Sections of this Chapter.

CHAP. VI. How the Lords way and appearances for the Church
Scotland since the Reformation hath been in a very peculiar manner extr
ordinar and remarkeable; both in its rise and advance, considered a
cleared in several evidences thereof.

CHAP. VII. A Touch at the present suffering of the Church
Scotland, *Sect.* 1, 2. The grounds whereupon such sharp trials & wtel
lings of the godly there, are peculiarly stated at this day, considered a
cleared; & how *Prelacy* is expressly contrair to the Scripture, and destru
ctive to the Church, *Sect.* 3, 4. A witness for the Lord, & of his very im
mediat appearance in some remarkeable providences now of late for h
Church and People in that Land. held forth, *Sect.* 5.

CHAP. VIII. What may be discernably seen to be the present stat
and hazard of the reformed Church, which should have a deep & serio
impression upon us, this day.

CHAP. IX. Some concerning and weightie *duties* here subjoined
which have a neer and undoubted connexion with the recovery of t
Churches intereſt, and promoting the power and life of Religion, when
is now so far gone in these sad and declining times.

CA

Cap. I.

The great appearances of God for his Church, under the New Testament.

Sect. 1.

IT is undeniable, that we must either cease to exerce reason, or confess the greatest interest men hath to be most taken up with here, the greatest event that ever was brought forth within time, is what is delivered to us in the Gospel, in that wonderful history by the four Evangelists of the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ: That such a time assuredly was, and now many ages since past, when the glorious Redeemer of the Church, the second person of the God head, came down from heaven, and was revealed to the world in our nature, about which the Old Testament and Prophecies thereof, had untill then been travaling still as in birth; yea with most clear and undeniable evidence did answer that season, which was expressly pointed at by the Scripture, and in that time when the ancient Church was with greatest longing and advertance looking forth for his appearance, which they knew could not be but very neer.

Sect. 2. BUt such is this great subject of the Gospel, and of that import, as nothing seems to bring

it more in question, than that the Christian world is not in another manner this day affected therewith, or can own a professed assent, without more serious returning on themselves in such an enquiry, if they can truely credit their own eyes herewith, yea how Christians indeed should be perswaded of its truth and certainty, and yet finde it so easie to bear that joy, which this should cause within their soul, so as to awake in the morning, and ly down at night without being in a more frequent transport of wondering, *to know what great things thus they are called to know and converse with*, when these thoughts are brought neer to us. 1. What mans estate should be here upon the earth if it were divided from the hope of the Gospel; and the necessity thus of a Mediator, on whom the sin of the elect Church might be by imputation transferred; since out of Jesus Christ, God is not to be found, but as a consuming fire. 2. That it is sure, God hath been manifested in the flesh, and the Redeemer of the Church is no more to come, but hath come already. 3. To know how great the end was to which the greatest designe, that ever the glorious God brought to light, in sending his own Son into the world could answer, which next to his own declarative glory, was to restore this rare work and frame of man, by a new creation, to condemn sin, that he might save sinners, to repair those ruins, and breaches sin had made, for which Angels, nor men could never have known a cure. 4. That thus our nature should be so highly advanced, and exalted as in the incarnation of Christ, to be assumed into that neer conjunction, and union, with the divine nature. 5. That it was not acquitance, and absolution only, from eternal wrath that is brought to light and ensured by the Gospel, but such a real change also, as hath therewith a being made meet by a new and spiritual nature formed within, for that blessed state which is above. 6. That it is so very short and uncertain a time, untill these eyes of ours be shut on the lower world, and all things that are here, and when this earth

arth must cease for ever to be the place of our abode, and ve to return to it no more. 7. For such to know, and ring neer their thoughts, over whom many sad dayes and ours hath gone; that no less than a heaven and an eter- al glory is before them; yea such a mervelous, and nspeakeably astonishing change shall once be in their state, om what they now are, so as to be equal to the Angels of od, to shine forth as the sun in their Fathers Kingdom; hen they shall draw in no other air, than the breathings f that higher paradise, and there in that blessed land be verlastingly ravished with the fulness of joy, and those leasures for evermore, which are in his presence: yea hat thus the most poor, and despicable amongst men, hath a rize set in his view to contend for, unconceaveably greater han all the crowns and Kingdoms of the earth. What houghts are these that could not but follow on the belee- ed truth and certainty of the Gospel, and who would not hus endure and watch, who knew such a change shall uickly be, of being entered into that state of glory? I sup- ose, that such a proposal as this were made to any, to en- ure the sorest outward pain, or ly in a dark prison in an fflicted and destitute state, to conflict with much outward ribulation, for some 20. or 30. or 40. years, and after to ave ensured his being made King over the most flourish- ng Kingdom, which is this day in the earth, & enjoy the same or many ages without the least change; who would debate uch a choice? Yet here is no possible shadow or resem- lance to that blessed hope, which the meanest Christian ath set before him. 8. Such also is the import of the truth f the Gospel, as not only ensures that state of glory above, ut an eternity therewith. Lastly, that it was infinit love nd distinguishing grace hath caused such a difference be- wixt those, who shall once dwell there, and that innumera- le multitude adjudged to everlasting torment.

Sect. 3. THough such is the concernment of the Gospel of Christ, as is no less than our being blessed here and for ever, yet we cannot but see it is no greater than that *security and fulness of evidence*, wherewith this day it is conveyed and made known, when it is so clear 1. That this could never have possibly entered into the thoughts of men, or been devised, but passeth all natural understanding, to know or comprehend in the least, if it had not been revealed to us in the Scripture, nor could humane knowledge have ever foreseen upon any principles of reason its taking place. 2. Was a Truth, which then took mens minde most up, as being the greatest transaction which ever was in the earth, yea thus not only to look on at a distance, as most do on the strange emergents of the time, but that which lay neer, as their own personal interest, wherein their state and being for all eternity, they knew was concerned. 3. A truth, which is by length of time still more confirmed, with a visible attestation of its power and mervelous effects; now through these sixteen centuries, conveyed to us; as the greatest Atheists know not, though at this distance of time, how to contradict the certainty thereof, but by shutting their eyes; yea visibly enforced oft to bewray some tremblings of heart within, to dare a disowning of that, which yet is their greatest torment. 4. A truth, which in all ages requires no reception in the World, but on mens exactest search and trial there anent, with a publick appeal, not to their light and judgment only, but experience. 5. A truth, whose known adversaries are such alone, as never knew it upon trial; and those in all ages most firm witnesses thereto, whose acquaintance hath been on the neerest approach, & hath had most familiar converse there with, yea such, who with greatest joy hath sealed the truth of the Gospel with their blood, because they knew it assuredly to be true; which is a weighty and strengthening remark, how the most experienced Christians, who hath the neerest followship with the Gospel, and

these

thoſe, and thoſe alone, who have the greateſt aſſurances thereof. 6. A truth, whoſe record is not more clear and legible in the Teſtimony of both *Old* and *New Teſtament* than it is upon the heart, and lives of innumerable witneſſes thereto, ſince the firſt times of the Goſpel, upon whom it hath been turned into a Practical Hiſtory, in the truth and vitals of a new life, and in their being viſibly changed in to the very ſame image. 7. A truth, about which all divided parties of the Chriſtian World, who were otherwiſe at greateſt diſtance among themſelves, have been enforced to be one in their conſent here; yea the *Jewiſh* as well as the Chriſtian writers, to bear the ſame witneſs, for matter of fact. 8. Such a truth, as could but once take place, and no poſſibility for its being reacted ever again, to which its expreſs time and bounds was ſet by the promiſe of God for many ages before the event 1 *Pet.* 1: 10, 11, 12. *Of which Salvation the Prophets have enquired and ſearched diligently, who prophefied of the grace that ſhould come unto you, ſearching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Chriſt which was in them did ſignifie, when it teſtified afore hand the ſufferings of Chriſt and the glory, which ſhould follow, unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themſelves, but unto us they did Miniſter the things which are now reported unto you.* Which then could not be in the dark to the *Jewiſh* Church, that his bleſſed coming was at hand, when ſuch clear grounds were given for a right computation & underſtanding thereof, both from *Jacobs* Prophecie of the Scepters departure from *Iudah*, from *Daniels* weeks, with thoſe great revolutions of the Monarchies, which had then ſo evident an accompliſhment in the event, and as high-way marks were for this end ſet forth in that Prophecie; and whilſt they knew certainly the extent of thoſe weeks, could only be weeks of years, that ſurely the laſt period thereof was then drawing near, about that very time of Chriſts appearance. 9. A truth not wrapt up in ſome General account, but ſuch as both in the Prophecies and event, is delivered with moſt clear and expreſs circumſtances, ſo equal and congruous to

themſelves in the whole Relation hereof, as nothing can be more convincing. 10. Such is this greateſt truth of the Goſpel, where all may ſee one aim and ſcop in the whole of that Hiſtory, without intermixing any thing that hath not ſome evident congruity thereto, yea though different pen men, and thoſe at ſo great a diſtance of time, yet here are both the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, ſo cloſly connected, and meet in one bleſſed point & center, that to divide theſe from Jeſus Chriſt, the whole work and frame thereof, ſhould be diſſolved. 11. A Truth, which none of the Gentiles could receive & own, but by quiting that Religion they were bred and educat in, & of ſo long a time tranſmitted from their Fathers; which was ſuch a Religion, as put no reſtraint upon following the luſts and pleaſures of the fleſh; yea thus to abandon the ſame, where no privat intereſt or advantage, no viſible incitement from any other airth, beſides the power and certainty of the truth it ſelf on their ſoul, could poſſibly be known to influence ſuch a change. 12. A Truth, which with no human confidence or aſſiſtance, did then confront the world in its greateſt ſtrength, without the leaſt flattering of any, nor did ever loſe ground by the greateſt oppoſition. 13. Which was no tranſient g'ance to the world, not for ſome dayes or monethes only, but a continued time of ſeveral years, did our bleſſed Redeemer viſibly converſe here upon the earth, yea to confirm our faith the more in his being truely man, did goe through all thoſe degrees of childhood, and infancy; & in that ſame ordinary way grow up to the full ſtature of man, to ſhew his being *made like unto us in all things, excepting ſin*, and that he did truely *partake of fleſh and blood with his children*. 14. To confirm the certainty of this bleſſed truth, is it not alſo undeniable, that the *Jewiſh, & Pagan* adverſaries, did not for ſo many ages conflict and wreſtle with their own ſhadow, in oppoſing the Chriſtian faith, but what to their torment they found to be

in

greatest earnest; nor was it a comedy, or personated
ffering, which the first publishers of the Gospel did un-
ergo, but what was assuredly reall, yea that pain and
ardship they endured in their confessing of Jesus Christ,
nd owning his truth, was no dream or illusion, either
themselves, or the world; and what could have been
make the shadow and appearance of being Christians at
ch a rate, desireable; no humane understanding can
ach. 15. And is it not clear, that Christianity is the
ry ornament and perfection of our nature, and in some
gun degrees even here, doth restore us to that right and
minion over the flesh, which was once lost, to a trans-
rming from the condition of beasts, unto that of men;
a as love to the world doth visibly assimilate the
pirits of men unto the same Image, so as the more neer
proach to the flesh, the further seperat from God; and
the soul is defiled, and turns earthly, in the same mea-
re is it darkned and alienat from the life of God; there
nothing more clear also, than this, how the love of
hrist, which hath its alone rise from him, doth by a
lessed constraint, carry the soul with its furthest consent
him again, to imbosome it self there, until it be whol-
unite with its own element, and this with as native
tendencie, as the sparks flie upward. 16. Can it be in
other manner the *Jewes* could expect their *Messias*,
han in that way our blessed Redeemer came, except they
ring some other Authority, then the *Old Testament*
r it; and terminate their desires herein, for having one
fill their belly, and please the flesh; or can these own
ther Scripture or reason, and not see how far all earthly
randour is below that inward beauty of the soul, and
ively illumination thereof, with the knowledge of God,
he hope of that glory, which is to come, and begun
ictory over the flesh and lusts thereof; except they own
preference of the body to the soul, and the pleasures of
he beasts, to those of Angels. 17. Such is this truth, as

could not possibly, without making void the faithfulnes of God, have taken place in another time, or in the succeed ing ages, when once the destruction of Jerusalem, th ceasing of the daily sacrifice, with the scattering of the Je wish nation, was accomplished. I shall but here further add, that such is the truth of the Gospel, as nothin could have been more cross to humane reason, more ob structive of its success, or have caused a greater stumblin to the dark world, than the delivery and publishin thereof, with those circumstances recorded in the histor of the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, with that ig nominy which attended the same, his low estate, an being rejected of his own people; if there had been po sible access for consulting with flesh and blood, or t walk by rules of humane wisdom herein, yea any groun else to lean on, than the certainty of its own truth, and tha assuredly thus should be the power and wisdom of God to such as were ordained to life. O blessed, blesse truth, on which so great an interest leans, and so rare structure and workmanship hath been founded, as th Christian Church even to this day; here is enough t answer all, when humane comforts doe most fail and to countervail the griefs and sorrows of a sad time.

Sect. 4. WE see that time of the coming of the *Mes sias*, at such a signal Periode, and cris in the condition then of the world, as should be gravel observed. 1. Under *Augustus* reign when the Temp of *Janus* was shut, because of an universal peace; tha thus with more serious advertance the world might re gard so great a thing, as could not but be astonishing wit those circumstances that followed thereon, to most o the nations about, which then were not prejudged wit the noise of tumults or warr, from being reached wit this great discovery. 2. At such a time did this blesse Healer come, and made first offer of himself to the Je wish

ish nation, when its condition was in that measure de-
orable, as it seemed to be almost past cure, and it is clear
om the ancient *Rabbins* and their own *Talmude*, how
ch a reckoning they did then make, for a most sad and
rk time when the *Messias* should first appear. 3. Such
so was that blessed time of his being revealed to the
entiles, when nothing could have been more repugnant
such times, than the Doctrine of Christ and the cross,
ithout the convey of an extraordinary divine power;
hen after so great universal peace, the *Roman Empire* with
nations about were most remarkeably drowned in all
xury and voluptuousness, beyond the rate of former
es. 4. It was then the Redeemer came, and brought
e, and immortality to light unto the dark nations, *when*
world through wisdome knew not God, but was still
at dark midnight in the knowledge of divine
ings; yea after the wisdom and learning of those ages
st had been to the furthest improvn in their enquiry
ter truth, when the *Grecians* had conveyed what they
ould from the *Egyptians*, and the *Romans* from them, yet
id still lose themselves more in groping to seek the right
oor, by the dim light of nature, nor knew how they came
nto that estate, in which they found themselves; so as
ll may see, 1. The utter insufficiencie of natural abi-
ties, now since the fall, to give light about divine truths,
o know either what God is, or how he is to be worshipped,
r the true cure and relieve of such visible corruption of
ature. 2. What a divinity men would frame to them-
elves, without supernatural revelation, whilst nothing
as more absurd, and to astonishment irrational, than
hat Religion which was then owned in the *Roman Em-
ire*. 3. That it is the Doctrine of Jesus Christ only re-
vealed in the Gospel, & his immediate concurrance there-
with, could accomplish that change on the world, and
he Spirits of men, which no moral Philosophie could ever
do, to have such an irresistible prevalence over nature,

themſelves in the whole Relation hereof, as nothing can be more convincing. 10. Such is this greateſt truth of the Goſpel, where all may ſee one aim and ſcop in the whole of that Hiſtory, without intermixing any thing that hath not ſome evident congruity thereto, yea though different pen men, and thoſe at ſo great a diſtance of time, yet here are both the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, ſo cloſly connected, and meet in one bleſſed point & center, that to divide theſe from Jeſus Chriſt, the whole work and frame thereof, ſhould be diſſolved. 11. A Truth, which none of the Gentiles could receive & own, but by quiting that Religion they were bred and educat in, & of ſo long a time tranſmitted from their Fathers; which was ſuch a Religion, as put no reſtraint upon following the luſts and pleaſures of the fleſh; yea thus to abandon the ſame, where no privat intereſt or advantage, no viſible incitement from any other airth, beſides the power and certainty of the truth it ſelf on their ſoul, could poſſibly be known to influence ſuch a change. 12. A Truth, which with no human confidence or aſſiſtance, did then confront the world in its greateſt ſtrength, without the leaſt flattering of any, nor did ever loſe ground by the greateſt oppoſition. 13. Which was no tranſient g'ance to the world, not for ſome dayes or monethes only, but a continued time of ſeveral years, did our bleſſed Redeemer viſibly converſe here upon the earth, yea to confirm our faith the more in his being truely man, did goe through all thoſe degrees of childhood, and infancy; & in that ſame ordinary way grow up to the full ſtature of man, to ſhew his being *made like unto us in all things, excepting ſin*, and that he did truely *partake of fleſh and blood with his children*. 14. To confirm the certainty of this bleſſed truth, is it not alſo undeniable, that the *Jewiſh*, & *Pagan* adverſaries, did not for ſo many ages conflict and Wreſtle with their own ſhadow, in oppoſing the Chriſtian faith, but what to their torment they found to be

in

greatest earnest; nor was it a comedy, or personated ffering, which the first publishers of the Gospel did un- ergo, but what was assuredly reall, yea that pain and rdship they endured in their confessing of Jesus Christ, d owning his truth, was no dream or illusion, either themselves, or the world; and what could have been make the shadow and appearance of being Christians at ch a rate, desireable; no humane understanding can ach. 15. And is it not clear, that Christianity is the ry ornament and perfection of our nature, and in some gun degrees even here, doth restore us to that right and minion over the flesh, which was once lost, to a trans- rming from the condition of beasts, unto that of men; a as love to the world doth visibly assimilate the pirits of men unto the same Image, so as the more neer proach to the flesh, the further seperat from God; and the soul is defiled, and turns earthly, in the same mea- re is it darkned and alienat from the life of God; there nothing more clear also, than this, how the love of hrist, which hath its alone rise from him, doth by a lessed constraint, carry the soul with its furthest consent him again, to imbosome it self there, until it be whol- unite with its own element, and this with as native tendencie, as the sparks flie upward. 16. Can it be in other manner the *Jewes* could expect their *Messias*, han in that way our blessed Redeemer came, except they ring some other Authority, then the *Old Testament* or it; and terminate their desires herein, for having one fill their belly, and please the flesh; or can these own ther Scripture or reason, and not see how far all earthly randour is below that inward beauty of the soul, and ively illumination thereof, with the knowledge of God, he hope of that glory, which is to come, and begun ictory over the flesh and lusts thereof; except they own preference of the body to the soul, and the pleasures of he beasts, to those of Angels. 17. Such is this truth, as

could not possibly, without making void the faithfulnes of God, have taken place in another time, or in the succeed ing ages, when once the destruction of Jerusalem, th ceasing of the daily sacrifice, with the scattering of the J *wish* nation, was accomplished. I shall but here furthe add, that such is the truth of the Gospel, as nothin could have been more cross to humane reason, more ob structive of its success, or have caused a greater stumblin to the dark world, than the delivery and publishin thereof, with those circumstances recorded in the histor of the death and sufferings of Jesus Christ, with that ig nominy, which attended the same, his low estate, an being rejected of his own people; if there had been po sible access for consulting with flesh and blood, or t walk by rules of humane wisdom herein, yea any groun else to lean on, than the certainty of its own truth, and th assuredly thus should be the power and wisdom of God to such as were ordained to life. O blessed, bless truth, on which so great an interest leans, and so rare structure and workmanship hath been founded, as th Christian Church even to this day; here is enough t answer all, when humane comforts doe most fail and to countervail the griefs and sorrows of a sad time.

Sect. 4. WE see that time of the coming of the *Me sias*, at such a signal Periode, and cri in the condition then of the world, as should be gravel observed. 1. Under *Augustus* reign when the Temp of *Janus* was shut, because of an universal peace; th thus with more serious advertance the world might re gard so great a thing, as could not but be astonishing wit those circumstances that followed thereon, to most the nations about, which then were not prejudged wit the noise of tumults or warr, from being reached wit this great discovery. 2. At such a time did this bless Healer come, and made first offer of himself to the J *wis*

ish nation, when its condition was in that measure de-
orable, as it seemed to be almost past cure, and it is clear
om the ancient *Rabbies* and their own *Talmude*, how
ch a reckoning they did then make, for a most sad and
rk time when the *Messias* should first appear. 3. Such
so was that blessed time of his being revealed to the
entiles, when nothing could have been more repugnant
such times, than the Doctrine of Christ and the cross,
thout the convey of an extraordinary divine power;
hen after so great universal peace, the *Roman Empire* with
nations about were most remarkeably drowned in all
xury and voluptuousness, beyond the rate of former
es. 4. It was then the Redeemer came, and brought
e, and immortality to light unto the dark nations, *when*
world through wisdome knew not God, but was still
at dark midnight in the knowledge of divine
ings; yea after the wisdom and learning of those ages
st had been to the furthest improvn in their enquiry
ter truth, when the *Grecians* had conveyed what they
ould from the *Egyptians*, and the *Romans* from them, yet
id still lose themselves more in groping to seek the right
oor, by the dim light of nature, nor knew how they came
nto that estate, in which they found themselves; so as
l may see, 1. The utter insufficiencie of natural abi-
ties, now since the fall, to give light about divine truths,
o know either what God is, or how he is to be worshipped,
r the true cure and relieſe of such visible corruption of
ature. 2. What a divinity men would frame to them-
lves, without supernatural revelation, whilst nothing
as more absurd, and to astonishment irrational, than
hat Religion which was then owned in the *Roman Em-*
ire. 3. That it is the Doctrine of Jesus Christ only re-
ealed in the Gospel, & his immediate concurrance there-
with, could accomplish that change on the world, and
he Spirits of men, which no moral Philosophie could ever
o, to have such an irresistible prevalence over nature,

custome, education, and whatever interest had formerly command over their natural disposition, which nothing but a Divine power could bring about.

Sect. 5. WE may see, the world was in these times no stranger to the fame and report of Jesus Christ, and how publickly conspicuous his appearance then, as nothing could be more known for matter of fact; was in no hid corner, but notour, famous, and undeniably manifest, at *Jerusalem*, before the *Romans*, at the passover, when such a confluence of strangers from other places were present, at the sufferings of our Lord; yet which in so short a time after, put the world in such a flame, and for all hath befallen that people of the *Jewes*, did they never to this day once offer to deny or disown what their Fathers did herein: Some few passages I shall insert as witness hereto. 1. What *Josephus* hath *lib. 18. cap. 4.* *in the same time there was a wise man (if we may call him a man) who was a worker of miracles, & teacher of them that willingly receive the truth, had many both Jewes and Gentiles his followers, and was believed to be the Christ: and when* Pilate *had crucified him, through the envy of our Rulers, yet those that first loved him were constant in their affection, for he appeared to them alive the third day, as the Prophets foretold both this and many wonderful things of him, from whom are the Christians so called to this very day.* Thus *Jerome* in his book of *Ecclesiastick* writers sets down which reading of his (*he was beleeved to be the Christ*) is judged preferable to that of *Eusebius* (*hic fuit Christus*) or as it is in our ordinary translations of *Josephus*: since as *Usher* in his annals shewes, *what length soever Josephus came, yet was he not a directly professed Christian.* The *Jewes* have in after times essayed to raze this whole testimony out of their books, as *Baronius*, and other writers shewes, but with that disadvantage, that for so many ages before, this was publick and famously extant, which their Ancestors could not offer to contradict.

2. We

We have that honourable testimonie *Josephus* also
es to *John Baptist lib.* 18. *cap.* 7. Whose words are, *Herod*
Tetrarch killed Iohn sirnamed the Baptist, a most excellent man,
stirred the Iewes to the exercise of vertue, especialy to the
hing of Baptism, which he said would be then acceptable to
, but in having their mindes first purged through righteous-
, they added cleannesse of body thereto, & from the great resort
to him, Herod fearing his Authority might raise some rebel-
, thought it safe to take him out of the way. 3. That of
. *Tacit.* a most known adversarie to Christians, whose
ds are these, *annals* 15. speaking of the Christians,
stianos appellavit. Author ejus nominis Christus, qui Tibe-
mperitante per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio af-
us fuit. Thus expresly witnessing the sufferings of the
rd to have been under *Tiberius* reign, and at that very
e, whilst *Pontius Pilat* did rule in *Iudea*; a relation, that
may see, could be from no respects in the least to that
y, but to hold forth only the truth in matter of fact so
nous and known in that time he wrote, which was al-
ost in the very same age with the Apostles. 4. Thus
acrobius also relates *Saturn. lib.* 2. *cap.* 4. when *Augustus*
ard, how *Herod* among the children he caused kill of the
ves within two years old, that a son of his own was killed
o,' he said it was better to be *Herods* hog then his son.
Both *Ruffinus* and *Eusebius* do appeal the heathen to
eir own annals, that in *Pilats* time when Christ suffered,
e sun did suddenly withdraw, and darkness ensued,
hich was than extant in the *Romans* records in their
me. *Eusеb. lib.* 9. *cap.* 6. and *Tertullian Apol. ad Gentes*
p. 21. shewes how then the day was withdrawn, whilst
e sun was at the height, which those who knew not that
concerned Christ, judged to be only an eclips, yet say-
th he, *ye finde this recorded in your own monuments*;
ea *Thallus* a heathen writer, and *Fleg. Tral. lib.* 13. *Chron.*
heathen also, are both cited on the same account, the
ne by *Iulius Africanus in the* 3. of his *Chronologie*; the
other

other by *Origen* against *Celsus Pag.* 83. as *Usher* in his *Annales* shews.

Sect. 6. IT was with the first dawnings of the Christian Church, that stupendious and great Seal was then put to the truth by the gift of tongues and different languages; which besides that infallible authority of the Scripture, is with such undeniable evidence to this day demonstrable on grounds of reason, as can leave no possible access, to debate the same, where it is clear 1. That then was the time come for all nations to know the Gospel, & when that wall of partition was to be taken down. 2. That the Commission and Authority given to the Apostles and Evangelists of Christ for their work and Ministry, was of no less extent, than to the whole world with an express promise of this mervelous gift, as is clear both from the last of *Matth.* and *Mark.* 3. That the delivery over of the Doctrine of the Gospel to the nations, had then an undoubted necessity hereof, not as a confirming sign and Miracle only, to attest the truth of the Gospel, but as an instrumental mids, for making the design thereof effectual, whilst these different languages put so evident a let to their work, or any successful pursuance of it, without such an extraordinary mean. 4. It is sure, that in no ordinary way, without such a Miracle could ever the Christian faith have in that manner spread, & come to the most dark places of the earth, by those Instruments, who were chosen, & made use of for the same such as some poor fishermen and publicans, who were known to be rude and unlettered, even to the conviction of the Jewes; yea when it is evident, their furthest reach could only have been, to know their vulgar language which then was the *Syriack.* 5. Should not those undoubted and mervelous effects, which followed thereon infer the conviction of so extraordinary a mean, when in less then 40. Years, after the first publishing of the Gospel,

l, such famous Churches were planted in the most rk and remote parts of the world, as all ancient records tness: so that we cannot more wonder to read such a pendious thing, as the gift of languages was at that ne, than we should to know, how possibly without is such an early and universal spreading of the Christian urch could have been through the World, 6. Is it t clear, how this great Miracle is of an other manner, n others then wrought to confirm the truth, that it was t in some one place witnessed, where those only pre- t could have access, but was notour and publick in se Churches, where the Christian faith was first planted the Apostles, so as the very being of the Christian urch could not be more obvious, than the truth of this those times. 7. If such a matter of fact could have en possibly gain said, would the Jewes then have been anting, who so much sought to strengthen their preju- ce against the Gospel, to appear in open contradiction ereto, when the account given hereof was made pub- k and known to all. 8. It is thus evident, how the cripture of the New Testament not upon the matter nly, but the very language wherein most of the penmen ereof wrote, was in an extraordinary way given them om Heaven; nor can it be judged, that to such as *Peter*, *ames* and *John*, who were fisher men, and *Mathew*, who ere of the meanest of the people, the Greek language was ould have been so familiar, which was not their own ulgar tongue, as to write therein. 9. Thus also may e seen, that which was a stroke and judgment once, in he first dividing and confusion of tongues, made so re- narkable a blessing for the spreading of the Gospel, the ne suited to that time of the Churches inclosure from the est of the earth, and as an interdiction served upon he nations about, the other for its furthest extent and preading, so as the one did shut the doore, the other did o less wonderfully set it open.

Sect.

Sect. 7. THough such extraordinary signes were the undeniable, both for confirming and spre ding of the Gospel, yet is it manifest, that the greate mean for making this effectual, and building of the Chr stian Church, wherein her blessed head chooſed to have h appearance most remarkeable, and convincing in tho times, was *by the effusion of the Holy Ghost*, and co currance thereof with his word on the hearts of men, Truth I must say, should be in another manner thought o if we knew the weight and import of this, that so gre an Attestation to the Gospel, and the certainty of it, nothing can be greater, is by those assurances to be know and no less demonstrable, than we can be sure of t form and being of Christianity. Though I have elsewhe touched this subject, I must here add somethings furthe to clear that peculiar respect this hath, in a greater man festation thereof to the times of the New Testament, b yond any former ages of the Church, as that greate gift expresly promised and reserved to the same, and ho sure and visible it hath been in the event; when we m see, that untill then, the Work of the Spirit was mo known, as a privat seal on the hearts of the godly, than b any such publick witness, as a confirmatory seal of the D ctrine of the Church, and Commission of the Publishe thereof before others; And untill then was that eviden and demonstration of the Spirit in no such manner know with an enforcing conviction on the conscience of thos who were otherwise strangers to its work on their ow souls, as hath been undeniable under the Gospel; y that the sin against the Holy Ghost, for which there is n atonement, is only thus mentioned under the New T stament, and with respect to those times of so visible manifestation thereof. 2. Untill then was no such ill mination of the Spirit let forth, for discerning of spiritu things, and opening up the Mysteries of the Gospel, s searching out the deep things of God, nor were tho

Must

ysteries formerly sealed up, in such a manner unvailed till the times of the Gospel. 3. It was most clear with ose remarkeable sufferings of the Christian Church, ich so early then broke up, and for the most of after es continued till this day; how convincing the send- down of the Comforter was, to bear out the credit of people, & make good their incouragement under those atest trials, and that thus those livings springs of comforts of the Holy Ghost, did in those times no remarkeably break up; yea, in some sutable measure, he drying up of those lower consolations, which were merly let forth, when the promises lay more in exter-. 4. If we own this visible creation to be the im-diate Work of God, above the possiblity of second ses, it is then sure, the Spirit of the Lords moving reon for its first bringing forth, is not more demon-able, than that effectual operation and moving of the e Spirit with the Doctrine of Christ, for a bring- forth of the Christian World, which is no less won-rful and stupendious in its frame, than the other, and e concurrence of instruments in that time, as to what ey were in themselves, so unsutable for such an end; all may see, it was the same word that said in the be-nning, *let there be a Heaven, and an earth*, which en with no less evidence said, let there be a new Chri-n World, and flourishing Churches brought forth out the most rude, dark and savage parts of the earth. It is now under the New Testament, that the Spirit ven by our blessed Redeemer, to supply his room with Church here untill he come again, is made eminently rth, *in sealing us to the day of redemption Ephes.* 1: 13. nd imparting the first fruits, & earnest even here, of that orious inheritance above, yea in a more discernable act- & writing forth in a Practical History, those truths of e breathings, movings, teachings, quickenings, & com-tings of the holy Ghost, as the real work & transcript of the

the Spirit on the hearts of the saints, causing them t
know the Kingdom of God within. 6. It is now al
that the spirituality of Religion, & necessity thereof in th
worshipping of God, is in a further measure opened up an
made known, which in former times, whilst the Gospe
was exhibit under shadows, was then more in the lette
in external ordinances and duties, than in the Spirit an
inward conformity thereto, which is so sweet and eas
a way the Lord hath put his people upon to serve him.
shall but add this one thing more, how under the time
of the Gospel, that marvelous endwelling of the ho
Ghost, is more eminently known to the Church, not b
some transient motions of light and love: but that fam
liar abode and residence ensured thus by an irrevocabl
donation to the Christian Church, *Joh.* 14. *vers.* 1
for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you, and abi
for ever.

Sect. 8. IT was then with the first dawning of the Go
pel, and ingathering of the Nations to th
Church, that so conspicuous an attestation of that tru
did immediatly follow thereon *Jo.* 12. 32. that in *Chris*
being lifted up from the earth, he should draw all men after him
when a standart was thus lift up to the dark and *Pag*
world, not to invite them only, but by an invisible ef
ficacious power to determine their consent and incomin
unto him. This was indeed a most strange astonishing Pro
phecie, and now is one of the greatests seals, that eve
was appended to the Christian faith, than which nothin
could be more clear in the event, that he who hat
spoken, hath also done this, and is no illusion or impo
sture, 1. That no such change was ever known upo
the world, untill that blessed time came of the Redee
mers being lift up on the cross *and then did he rent th*
heavens and come down, to cause the mountains flow dow
at his presence 2. That this power which thu
dre

rew the world after it; *did not strive or cry, nor was its voice heard in the streets, yet such a voice as enforced* the uttermost parts of the earth to subject thereto, with greatest desire and consent. 3. That the *needles pointing* to the *Pole*, which is certainly one of the greatest mysteries of nature, can be no more sure, than that such, who were as uncapable to move or stirr, as the cold *Iron*, did then by a touch of this *hyper-magnetick* power, naively move toward Jesus Christ, yea whom having not been to love, by such a pull at their heart, as could not fail to bring the grip therewith. 4. That no rank or state of men from the greatest Monarches to the meanest, no different size of mans life, from infancy unto old age, hath been since Jesus Christ was lifted up on the cross, on whom this blessed drawing power hath not been conspicuously verified. 5. How innumerable are they, who were thus drawn, & made to move against their native bias, so as with their deliberate choice, to quite their right eye and hand for the truth; to let the world see, and oft hath this sight been its amazement, how a touch of this power at the heart is such, as in one moment can prevail more, than all the inticements of the earth can withstand. 6. How oft this power hath been most discernable, when least of ordinary means was for such an end, whilst no Teacher but the inward teaching of the Spirit though by the word; yea on such, where the greatest disadvantage, both from education and their natural disposition, might be evident; what rude, savage, unsensible and stupid person sin-bittered in their enmity to the Gospel, hath our blessed Redeemer thus drawn in to himself by one touch of his hand at their heart.

Sect. 9. IT was the immediate appearance of Gods judgment, which no distance of time can darken; in that desolating stroake on the *Jewish* nation & *Jerusalem*, within a few years after the suffering of Christ by the Ro-

mans under *Titus Vespasian*; a stroake both in the manner and continuance, such as no instance present or past could ever be found to resemble, and when seriously considered, one of the greatest appearances of God against a people hath been, since man was formed in the earth; where these concurring circumstances, for giving light thereto, call for our serious observing. 1. That in so short a time after the death of our blessed Lord, not above 40. years, this should take place, and that blood fall on them in that very generation, with their hands as it were, hot and reicking in the same, which they had wished on them and their children. 2. By the *Romans*, whose interest in their opposition to Christ, they pretended most to own. 3. By such an instrument also, as *Titus Vespasian* of so singularly sweet a natural disposition, so milde, and compassionat, as he was called *delicia humani generis*; yea one, who to the furthest sought a preventing of their ruin, that all might see it was the finger of God. 4. Their being visibly enforced to be executioners of their own judgment, so as the adversaries without, did not so effectually concurre to accomplish this, as they did amongst themselves, to shew its being something fatal beyond all posibility to save. 5. That the time thereof should be at the passover, not only thus for a greater ruin, by the in gathering of such multitudes from the whole land into the city, but also by this remarkeable circumstance, to point as with the finger at the cause of so stupendious a judgment, and thus tryst at that very time of the sufferings of the Lord there. 6. That no repentance or serious enquiry after the true cause, did follow, but more desperat induration, a being broken without contrition, or humbling. 7. That strange contrariety and malice then, and to this day against the Christians, more than any other party, yea than against the *Romans*, who had been the instruments of their ruin; even whilst they knew the Christian Church sought no other decisive judge than

these

ose sacred records of the Old *Testament* betwixt them.
A stroake not on the nation, their families, and persons
nly, but on the Temple, to the ceasing of the daily
crifice, and that *Levitical* service, they so much trusted
, with such a concurrance of providences therein, as
ight thus shew the institution of that service was
en ceased. It is observable that after the coming of
hrist, and that one blessed sacrifice in his death was of-
red up, that the custome of sacrificing, not only a-
ongst the *Iewes*, but what had been this way amongst
e heathen also, did then cease every where through the
orld. 9. So convincing was a divine hand in this stroake,
Titus, though a heathen, could answer his friends
their desire to have him crowned, that he was not the
uthor of that work, but had only given his hands to
rve the judgment of God herein, as even by heathen
riters is witnessed; and those known meddals, which
th to following ages been still reserved, hath that im-
ress thereon, of *Vespasian*, and a woman sitting sor-
wful, under a *Palm tree* with these words *IUDÆA*
APTA. S. C. 10. We may see also their scattering,
far extended through the world, that there might be
conspicuous a monument of judgment set up, and made
scernable to all, as the furthest extent of Christianity.
is indeed strange men does not more seriously turn aside
consider those two great sights, now under the Gos-
el, the one of the scattered *Iewes*, so amazing a beakon
t up for all ages to look on; the other of the *Romish*
hurch, so as to enquire what these mean, whilst both
ives such clear light to the truth, and accomplishment
f the word, as may silence the greatest *Atheist*.

ect. 10. IT was with those first times of the Gospel, that the fall and ceasing of the whole heathenish oracles was so remarkeable and confirming a seal hereto, as all times might see, before what power it was

they fell, and could no longer ſtand, theſe concurri
circumſtances being clear. 1. That for ſo many ag
the Devil thus had a throne, & ſubjection from the wor
and was one of the greateſt engines he ever followed, f
keeping it in aw by ſuch a counterfit, ſet up againſt t
living oracles of God, in his word. 2. That this ti
and ſeaſon of their fall, and being ſtruck dumb for eve
was ſo evident, whilſt the Devil was put to the hott
war, for keeping up his intereſt, and ſo cloſs a ſiege l
to his Kingdom by the Goſpel, ſo as on the furth
conteſt and ſtruglings he could then make, his Sce
ter was wreaſted out of his hand, and broken in the op
field. 3. We ſee, this marvelous event moſt clea
anſwer to what was foretold in the Scripture there
and as that which ſhould follow, on the promiſed ti
of the Goſpel, *Zach.* 13: 2. *Ioh.* 12: 31. 4. It is kno
in what a ſtrange amaze this put the world then, and i
to perplexed enquiries, what it could mean, that th
gods, whom for ſo many ages, the nations adored, a
ſought to in all doubtful caſes, ſhould thus at once
ſtruck dumb, about which *Lucan* heavily compleans; &
vinal Satyr. 3. that the gods by whom the *Empire* ſtoo
had thus abandoned their Temples and ſacrifice, and l
them alone. *Strabo* confeſſeth the Prieſts of *Delphos* w
brought to beggery by it, yea *Plutarch* hath a book
preſly thereupon, *de conticentia oraculorum*, and could
further reach it, but that it ſeemed they were mort
and that preſaging vertue the earth had, where the feat
thoſe oracles was, had been ſpent and exhauſted.

Sect. 11. IT may be convincing alſo, that teſtimo
which the Devil was then enforced to giv
and confeſs by what power thoſe oracles were reſtraine
as that known anſwer to *Auguſtus Legat* about his ſucce
ſor, cited by *Suidas* out of *Æmilius Portus*, and other m
ancient writers. *Me puer hebræus jubet hoc diſcedere templ*

ex divum & stygium, rursus remeare sub orcum Tu tacitus quare ec nostra altaria linque. Likewise that which *Justin Mar-*r, who wrote in the second century, cites of the oracle of *ppollo*, in these words. *Soli Chaldæi sapiunt: & hebræa virum, ens; qui puro haud gentum, venerantur pectore Numen. Just. Mart. P.* 16. I confess those with many passages of the *Sybil-'s* I sometimes judged to be no other, than the *piæ fraudes* f some Christians, which I know is the judgment of any; but on more serious enquiry, I cannot see how ese possibly can be cast or rejected, where such clear d pungent evidences are of their truth as. 1. That such force put upon the Devil to confess the truth of Chri-anity, is that which hath cleerest Scripture light and esident for the same *Acts* 16: 17. *Acts* 19: 15. 2. As is sure, the Devils believe and tremble, and that there is o possibility for *Atheism*, or questioning the truth of the cripture by those reprobat Spirits, there seems no cause or any to hesitat at such an enforcement, as this from e Lord to confess the same, as a witness of his soveraign-over them. 3. It is clear also, that upon this account, e *Roman* Senate was then forced to forbid the reading f the *Sybilla's*, as well as of the Scripture, by publick dict; lest thus any should be staggered about the *Pagan* eligion; as most ancient records of those times wit-ess, and is particularly cited by *Just. Mart. Apol.* 2. 82. and *Hottinger* holds forth *hist. lib.* 1. *P.* 55. 4. There no possible eviting that citation of the oracle, at *Cumæ*, *Virg. Eglog.* 6. which so evidently points at the Incar-ation of Christ, and being born of a *Virgin*. and was so or the time of that *Asinius Pollio*, to whom in flattery applieth this. 5. Though these are not to be owned any seal or confirmation to the Christian faith, but to ave the heathens thus more inexcusable, whose Reli-on was to Worship the Devil; yet may it be clear, what orrid impiety this should have been for any Christians obtrude such a falshood on the world, if the truth

thereof had not been evident; yea how is possible for this to passe without some publick contradiction thereto by the heathen adversaries, and such knowing Critikes amongst them; as *Lucian*, *Porphiry*, *Celsus*, and *Libanius* the *Sophist* were in these times?

SECT. 12. IT was remarkeable then, whilst Sathan is beat off his throne, by this fall of the oracles what struglings he still hath to counteract the Gospel by some lying wonders, in oppositon to those extraordinary signs, which were then given to confirm the truth as in *Simon Magus* whose dreadful close our Church writers hold forth; but most remarkeably in seting up that notable *Magician*, *Apollonius Thianæus*, one beyond most that ever the world knew of that kind, yea such as *Hierocles* brings in, to compet with those miracles of the Gospel; but how quickly, as in a moment, did that hellish vapour, exhaled out of the bottomless pit to trouble the air, in a little evanish and disappear?

SECT. 13. IT was remarkeable what breathing for a time the Christian Church, with its first upbreaking got, during the reign of *Tiberius Caligula*, and *Claudius*, which though short, yet was untill that blessed seed of Christianity in a great measure was sown among the nations by the preached Gospel, and had begun to take root, ere that dreadful impetuous storm of persecution which came after, break up. *Tiberius* being certified by *Pilate* out of *Palestine*, concerning the affaires of Christ, propose to the Senat his being reckoned amongst the gods, which they opposing, he threatened that it should be dangerous for any to accuse a Christian, as *Tertull.* relates *Apol. c.* 21. *Euseb. lib.* 2. *c.* 2. also *Gildas* in his *Epistles*, upon which it was judged after the killing of *Stephen*, that persecution so quickly ceased, through fear of *Tiberius*. Thus the Lord in his blessed way disposing, that the seed of the Gospel

Gospel should get a sowing time, and come to some solide growth, before any sharp, and great storm, and the truth be received, before the trial came, yea that Christ himself in the Power of his Word came first, to ensure the heart, before his Crosse, and a time of Persecution.

SECT. 14. WE see the first entry of the Churches sufferings from the Gentiles by a *Nero*, than whom none more visibly could be ever known, transformed into the image of the Devil; yea such a Monster, as at last the *Roman Senat* declared him to be *Hostis Patriæ, & Hostis humani generis*: That thus it might be in the blessed disposal of the Lord discernable to all. 1. By what Spirit such an instrument was acted forth to exerce those cruelties then among the Christians, as humane nature though corrupt, yet could not but stand at. 2. What a more excellent Spirit, and invincible power was in those to support and overcome such a fury. 3. That then the Great Standart of Sathans Kingdom was thus remarkeably set up, and brought to the fields against the Kingdom of Christ, by such a Spirit of persecution; and then did open war begin against the Gospel by the World; which though not alwayes in a like manner, or by the same weapons, hath these 1500. Years past successively continued, what this fore persecution, by *Nero* was, *Church Histories* give but little light thereto; but I shall offer another *Martyrologie* for this, which none will judge to be given as an intended witness to the Christian Truth, out of *Cornel. Tacit.* whose words are these. *Nero* having set *Rome* on fire, to extinguish the rumor thereof, did falsly accuse and punish with exquisite torments those whom the people then called Christians, First they were apprehended, who confessed themselves to be Christians, then an hudge multitude were convicted for setting the City on fire, but as he saith, for that hatred all men had against them, scornes also were added to their sufferings; some were covered with beasts skines to be torn by

Dogs, ſome were crucified, and ſome burnt, and whe
the day failed, they were burnt to give light by night, whil
Nero made his garden fitt for that ſpectacle ſo as pit
was by others taken, ſeing they ſuffered not for any commo
good, but to ſatisfie his cruelty, thus *Tacitus Lib.* 15. *Cap.* 4
which *Iuvenal* alſo holds forth.

SECT. 15. IT may be truely ſaid, and on cleareſt ground demonſtrable, that the Lords way with th Gentil Church in the firſt inbringing thereof, and for tw ages after, was as a continued Miracle, when thes are conſidered and brought near our thoughts. 1. How is ſo obvious, that that very time in the firſt two Centuri of the Churches hoteſt perſecution, was that time, where in the Chriſtian Church, ſo remarkeably ſpread in th World, yea, her begun declining did no leſs obſerveabl contemporat with that ſun-shine, which followed o outward peace and proſperity, after *Conſtantin's* time; truth ſo known and undeniable, that it yet ſhould be to u as it were, a preſent object of ſenſe this day. 2. Tha mervellous reſolution and joy, which then attended Chri ſtians in their extreameſt ſufferings, as they could not ſmo ther, or conceale the truth thereof, to the aſtonishment o the World, when nothing could be a greater contradictio to Senſe and Reaſon; here was that pretended *Apathy* o the ancient *Stoicks*, which they owned in their Doctrin but not example, in another manner to be underſtood, no that they wanted ſenſe and feeling of their pain and ſuffer ings, but theſe were made ſweet and eaſy, by a more ſen ſible over-powering taſte and ſealing of the Comforts o the Holy Ghoſt. 3. How here was a bearing up wit more than humane ſtrength againſt a cruelty, ſo viſibly in humane and Savage. 4. As its clear from the primitiv Hiſtories of the Church then, what amazement and con viction was thus enforced on the Conſcience of the Adver ſaries

faries, as it put them to enquire into the causes of their sufferings: As *Tertullian* shewes thus, *Quisque enim tantam toleranciam spectans, ut aliquo scrupulo percussus inquirere lacenditur, quid sit in causâ, & ubi cognoverit veritatem; ipse statim sequitur.* Tertul. Apol. Cap. 50. To wit, *that whilst onlookers saw such resolution in the sufferings of the Saints, were put to search what might be the Cause, and when once they knew the truth, did themselves also fall in love therewith, to follow it. And further thus, Quis enim non in contemplatione ejus constitutur ad requirendum quid intùs in re sit, quis non, ubi requisivit, accedit, ubi accessit, pati non exoptat? that is, who then in beholding this, was not shaken in that manner, as to a serious enquiry what might be in the matter, & who thus did once search after the truth, did not also engage therewith, yea who embraced it whose choice and desire was not also, to suffer for the same?* 5. The greatest of Atheists must see, that those did not thus suffer, to propagat a known delusion, and that such joy and exultation of Spirit amidst those torments, is not conceiveable without a divine immediare assistance, as the same *Tertullian*, who lived in the second Century, thus attests the Heathens herein, *Cum omni sævitiâ vestrâ concertamus. etiam ultrò erumpentes, magisque damnati, quam absoluti gaudemus.* That is, *We co flict and are helped to overcome your greatest cruelty, yea cheerefully to goe through all, rejoicing more in being sentenced and condemned, than in Absolution,* 6. How mean and feeble Persons, as many of those were, (when considered what they were in themselves) should thus endure that, which would have fainted, and been a terrour to the greatest natural courage.

Sect. 16. T was in those times, that this might be clearly seen, how such strange and amazing effects of the Gospel upon Christians was not more obvious, than such judicial effects of rejecting the same was upon others; with that rage and malice against the truth, which did in such a manner then burst forth, as the world had not known

before, yea no intereſt can be inſtanced from any record of former times, had ſuch a ſtrange oppoſition and contrariety thereto, as the truth of the Goſpel; a myſtery, which in ages before, not known by ſuch appearances until then, what that enmity betweene the ſeed of the woman, and that of the ſerpent was, as may be evident. 1. That inſatiable thirſt after Chriſtian blood, as *Sulpitius telles the world was no leſs exhauſted then by one perſecution, than by the moſt bloody warres.* 2. How this ſtrange violence and rage againſt the truth of the Goſpel could be owned upon no intereſt or private quarrel, but againſt ſuch, as shewed greateſt kindneſs to their Perſecutors, and greateſt freedome from revenge; ſuch, whom *Juſtin Martyr*, and *Euſebuis* alſo in his *Eccleſiaſtick hiſtory Lib.* 8. *cap.* 8. sheweth that the Adverſaries could not deny ſuch tenderneſs of Chriſtians towards them, as they prayed for their Perſecuting *Emperours*, for all the people that looked on, for the judge that condemned them, yea for the *Executioner*, to shew the world, how far the Spirit of Chriſtians ariſes above the world, and what a Spirit that muſt be, that did oppoſe and perſecute theſe. 3. Such cruelty to be thus exerciſed on all conditions, of women and children, which almoſt from Savages would have pleaded compaſſion and tenderneſs, as *Lactantius* shewes, *Ecce ſexus infirmus, & fragili ætas dilacerare ſe toto corpore, utique perpetitur, nonneceſſitate, quia licet vitare ſi vellent, ſed voluntate, quia confident in Deo. Lact. lib.* 5. *c.* 1. *which was, that ſuch then of that tender ſexe of women, and thoſe ſo young years, did endure to have their bodies rent, yea the flames of the fire, and this upon choice, and no enforcement of neceſſity, ſince they could have eſcaped, but becauſe they adventured on God himſelf.* 4. This might be notour from the manner of ſuch perſecutions, as *Juſtin Martyr* shewes, how uſuall then it was to expoſe them to wilde beaſts, and invent torments for puting Chriſtians to death, but withall, adds this, the more theſe were tried, the further increaſe had the Church. To witneſs that dread-

ful

ul and black day the light of the Goſpel puts on ſuch as eject it, and bring forth what is latent in nature, that they ould not have believed themſelves, yea that ſomething urther than mens natural enmity is here: to draw forth his to ſuch an aſtoniſhing and height of fury and violence, nd the very immediate power and incitement of the Devil.

Sect. 17. WHilſt Satan thus eſſayed but in vain by ſuch as *Nero* and *Domitian* to withſtand the Goſpel, and ſuch firſt buddings thereof, we ſee a little after ow he tryes the ſame weapon with more ſubtilty in putting n, ſuch as *Trajan*, *Adrian*, and *Antoninus Pius*, to follow he ſame work of perſecuting the Church, thus to cauſe in he world a greater abhorring againſt the truth in its being aſſaulted by ſuch Emperours, that for their juſtice and moderation in regard of the Lawes, were ſo endeared to the Empire. But as no weapon formed againſt the truth can proſper, this did not lett that mervellous ſpreading of the Goſpel then. But a clear Comentar was thus given upon that Scripture truth, that the wiſdome of the world is enmity with God, and none ſtated more remarkeably at a diſadvantage with the Goſpel, than ſuch: yea what a change that imbred contrariety in men againſt the truth, will cauſe on the greateſt Moraliſts, thoſe of moſt calme and peaceable diſpoſition, to a breaking forth in rage, when once they begin to be ſcorched with the heat and power thereof.

Sect. 18. IT was then, this immediate appearance of the Lord, to give ſome breathing and lucide interval to the Church, amidſt ſuch laſting ſtormes, might be evident. 1. In enforceing ſome of the Adverſaries themſelves, ſuch as *Plinius Junior*, who was in greateſt repute in thoſe times to aquite the Chriſtians of that they were charged with, as by his letter to *Trajan*, which gave

ſome

ſome ſtop to the preſent perſecution then, is clear: For h
ſhewes, *how far that infection (as he calleth it there) had cre*
into Cities, Townes and Villages, and that except in the matt
of their Religion, they were known to abſtain from all groſs crime
to keep their faith, and defraud no man; Yea which is mor
obſerveable in the cloſe of his letter, doth propoſe to th
Emperour a more favourable dealing towards the Chri-
ſtian Church, as the probable mean to prevent their fur
ther increaſe, which did the more advance, the more vio
lence had been uſed againſt them. *This letter with Traja*
anſwer by Tertull. Apol. & Euſ. Eccleſ. hiſt. lib. 3. c. 33. are there
ſet down at large. 2. By that extraordinary appearanc
of the Lord in anſwering the Chriſtian Legion under *Aure-*
lius Antoninus, when the *Roman* army was at a remarkeable
exigence in war with the *Vandales* and *Sarmates*, which wa
ſo convincing both to the Emperour, and his whole army,
as enforced this account by his letter to the Senate an
People of *Rome*, thereof; *That being with his army ready to Pe-*
riſh for want of water, and environed by the enemy, having
ſought of their Countrey gods, but in vain for help, that Chri-
ſtian Legion, which than was amongſt them, fell proſtrate on th
ground, and by prayer obtained ſuch an anſwer as there fell among
us (ſaith the Emperour) a moſt pleaſant cooling ſhowre from
heaven, but againſt the enemy a ſtorme of haill mingled with
lightning, ſo as preſently we found the invinceible aid of the moſt
mighty God. Vpon which he orders all perſecutions through ou
the Empire to ſiſt againſt the Chriſtians: *This in the ſame age*
doth Iuſtin Martyr ſet down in his Apology to the Roman Senate,
and is at length alſo cited by Tertullian and Aroſius, who herein
appeals the Adverſary to the Emperours letters in their own ſtand-
ing Records. 3. Which is moſt remarkeable, that even
under the Reigne of *Commodus the Emperour*, ſuch a bloody
monſter and ſcourge to the *Roman Senate* and *Empire*, the
Church of Chriſt then got a ſweet and favourable calme,
with ſome reſt for a ſeaſon, yea more than under the reigne
of ſome, ~~who~~ more favourable in their natural diſpoſition,

to

to shew that dominion, which the glorious God doth exerce, not only over the greatest, but the worst of men, nd how the most notable mercies and advantages of the Church are most usually brought forth, against all visible ppearances.

Sect. 19. THis also for the Churches support and strengthning in those times, should not want grave remarke in the Lords calling forth some, with singular advantage of gifts and humane learning, to oppose against the subtil cavils & reproach of the Adversary, for clearing of the truth; so as we may see, when such as *Porphiry*, *Lucian*, *Celsus*, &c. were at work to discredite the Christians by heir writings, such excellent men were no less discernably brought forth, for this present service of the Church, s *Quadratus*, *Aristides*, whose notable *Apologies* for the ruth of Christ, the one to *Trajan*, the other to *Adrian*, with some conviction, that this was enforced upon them, re cited by *Euseb. hist. lib.* 4. and *Jerome* in his *Catalogue*, and *Justin. Martyr*, who wrote a twofold *Apologie*, the one to he Senate, and the other to *Autoninus the Emperour*, and a ittle thereafter, *Tertullian*, & *Melito* of *Sardis*, whose weighty rguments are set down by most of ancient Church Histories, that it thus may be seen, no time since that mervellous erection of the Christian Church, hath wanted some discerneable out lettings of the Spirit for its present exigences: Yea, that such is the truth of the Gospel, that it comes with he furthest and cleerest advantage, to convince the judgment, as well as to engage the affections, and to offer it elf to trial to all, anent its truth, by undeniable reason, as well as experience. Thus did they appeal their Adversaries nent the truth, with such advantage, to enforce a conviction upon them, if these things could possibly be denied. 1. That their gods were forced to confess themselves to e Devils, as *Tertullian* shewes *Apol. cap.* 23. *And why doth ou not herein, (saith he) believe, when they speak truth, who yet believes*

believes them when they speake lies, whilst you see this could not be their own choice. whilst they witness against themselves, if they were not enforced. 2. That where ever the name of Christ was called upon, those Spirits, whom they worshipped, were under a visible restraint, as to their power; yea, the presence of a Christian, when the heathens were about their divination, and by their Priests seeking answer from the Devil; did so visibly frustrate those essayes, as made them cry out, *they were hindered by some of the Company. See Lactantius lib. 4. c. 27.* 3. That they could not but see in delivering the Doctrine of the Gospel and profession thereof, there was no tentation, nor any possible advantage to be looked for from the world, but did visibly counteract any such end, as repute and Credite in the Earth, outward riches, or delights of the flesh, their whole life a continued course of suffering and trouble, no visible grounds of hope, *but were of all men most miserable, if in this life they had owned their hope*, and had no other assurances, than what is here. 4. If that Doctrine they professed, and bare witness to, of the Gospel, did not bring with it the greatest enforcements of sincerity, truth in the heart & inwards parts, and speaking of the truth in every thing, whatever hazard should follow. 5. If such was not the Doctrine of Christianity, as all might see, so far above the reach of humane wisdome, the furtheſt learning of the Greeks, as was wholly impossible, that such persons as the Apostles were, could ever have had, or known this of themselves. 6. That the Christian Doctrine, and that only, could settle the soul on a sure foundation, whilst the knowing amongst the heathens were in such continual fluctuating and uncertainty about any truth of religion, or an after state; and most of their gods, as *Jupiter*, *Saturne*, &c. by that very account themselves give, were some of the vilest of men, and had been in the former ages, notable for oppression and villanies. 7. That the very Mysteries of the heathen religion were horrid and impure, so as they durst not let them be common

mmon and known; but O that infinite purity of Scripture, *ctify them by thy truth, thy Word is Truth Ioh.* 17: 8. This ſo the Heathes could not know how to deny, that Chri-anity brought with it ſuch a publick bleſſing to mankinde, d ſo undeniably tend to a perfecting of humane nature, d engaging to thoſe duties of mutual profit and ſubſer-ency amongſt men towards one another, ſuch as love, nderneſs, ſympathy with the afflicted, which by their vn greateſt writers was accounted puſilanimity, and as ice rather than vertue, as *Laertius in vita Zenonis* expreſly ewes *Pag.* 512. and of what ſingular uſe to preſent thoſe bittering torments, diſorders and perturbations, that natively follows a proud and vindictive Spirit, as the adow on the body, by its bleſſed tendency to move the ul, yea transform it into humility and meekneſs and what uſtre it puts not on men only, but on thoſe very parts of e earth, where Chriſtianity doth in its vigour shin rth.

ECT. 20. IT is remarkeable, how in the very cloſe of the Churches ſufferings, from the heathen lverſarie, that laſt aſſault under *Diocletian*, was of all oſt grievous and ſearching; whoſe expreſs edicts were en given forth not againſt Chriſtians only as to perſonal erſecution, but againſt Chriſtianity, and who laid forth mſelf more than any before, to have ſtruck, if poſſible the whole root, by ſubtilty as well as violence, ſo as this reateſt darkneſs, did go but a very little before the daw-ng of an univerſal peace, but with theſe convincing dvantages to the truth. 1. *In the bringing forth thus* a oſt remarkeable witneſs thereto, that when he purſued ſo uch the delivering up of their Bibles, which he moſt vi-orouſlie then eſſayed, and when it was ineffectual, ought but a leaf of clean paper, as a teſt of their yeeld-g; the Chriſtians then chooſed the furtheſt of ſuffer-gs, rather than to come this length; Upon which that

name

name was given to any, who thus yeilded, of being *tr*
ditores. 2. It was no leſs clear, that whilſt this *Emperour*
in his boaſting confidence had cauſed erect a pillar, wi
that inſcription on it DIOCLES. CÆS. AUGUS
SUPERSTITIONE' CHRISTI UBIQUE DE
LETA: CULTU DEORUM PROPAGATO:
Baronius at length ſhewes, *Vide Hotting. Part: 1. Cap.*
Pag. 182. And thus ſung the triumph before the Victor
he was broken in all his attempts, and ſo caſt down wi
the Churches further riſe and growth; as at laſt he reſigne
the *Empire*. 3. Then alſo was this marvelous appearanc
of the Lord, when the Church ſeemed to be at the ver
loweſt, that ſo very ſhort a time ſhould interveen betwixt
Diocletian and a *Conſtantine*.

SECT. 21. WE ſee in thoſe times when the Church
wreſtlings and perſecutions, were ſo re
markeable, ſuch great examples of judgement alſo ſet up
and made obvious for the worlds obſerving as migh
inferre ſome conviction therewith, that aſſuredly the
were no ordinary or caſual occurrents, of ſuch as have ha
uſual preſidents in the change of humane affairs, but th
verie immediat appearance of God made diſcernable there
in, to whom the blood of Saints is precious. 1. It i
known that *Pilat* was ſo continuallie vexed by *Cajus the Em*
perour; even he, who had over the wreſtlings of a natur
conſcience given forth that ſentence againſt our bleſſe
Lord, as he was enforced to kill himſelf and be his ow
executioner, as *Hierome in his Chronicle out of the Roman hiſto*
ry, *Euſebius in his Eccleſiaſtick hiſtorie*, *out of the Greek writer*
of the Olympiads lib. 2. cap. 7. Alſo *Caſſiodorus* in his *Chronic*
do with one conſent witneſs, as *Usher* in his *Annals*, hath ſe
down; And certainlie was then ſuch a paſſage, conſider
ing the partie to whom it relates, as would be gravely no
ticed, and with the exacteſt enquirie by Chriſtians of tha
time, yea this muſt have been ſo publick, as all may judg
th

the convoy and transmitting thereof could not easily have come under mistake, to those times wherein *Eusebius* and *Hierome* wrote. 2. We may see in that instance of *Herod Agrippa*, the verie first of the Kings of the earth, that stretched forth his hand against the Christian Church, a publick beacon of divine judgment, thus set up for the great men and *Monarchs* of after ages to take warning by; who, after he had killed *James* the Brother of *John* by the sword, in a publick appearance after the blasphemous shoutings of the people, was smitten by the Angel of of God, *Act.* 12: 17. Which (the very same in substance) is related by *Joseph. Antiq. lib.* 19. *c. ult. That when he had finished the third year of his reign, and at Cesarea Solemnized some playes for Cesars health, to which a great number of noblemen and young persons came, on the second day thereof, he goes in his princely robes, rich and curiouslie wrought with Silver, which by the suns reflexion made an extraordinary lustre, and whilst upon some flatterers saluting him as God, he did not refuse nor reject such impious adulation, did a little after see an owle sitting over his head, a prognostick of his ruine, was struck to the heart, with most grievous torments in his belly, so as he was forced to turn to his friends, and say, behold I, who by you was called a God, am commanded out of this life, and my present fate gives the lye to your flatteries, being forced to death whom you saluted as immortal; after which his pains increasing in great extremity he died.* Which passage besides Scripture Authority may be convincing to the greatest *Atheist*, to see whilst it is one in substance therewith, is in so different a manner, and with other circumstances by *Josephus*, set down; And how far this was from any intended concurrence with the *Evangelist Luke* therein, but as a part of the history of those times; yea was, by him written in the very same age when it fell out, an occurrent of that nature, as concerned all *Judea* to know, and could not from any private information be obvious to mistake, which was then so publick and famous in the view of the world.

3. We may then also see that famous Apostate *Lucian*, who lived near the first *Centurie*, once a profest Minister of the Gospel at *Antioch*, but after an avowed *Atheist*, and in hatred of the Christian faith, a promoter of *Paganism*, as those horrid *Dialogues* by him set forth, shew, was at last torn in pieces by dogs[1], as *Suidas*, with other writers of the Church History then shew. 4. It may be an astonishing remarke to all following ages, that for the first two hundred years after Christ, wherein were near 32. *Emperours*, not 3. of them was without either a violent death, or something singularly tragick in their close, as may be clear from the whole consent of the Records of that time. 5. It is most evident also, under those sore and continued persecutions of the Christian Church, what remarkeable judgments were then inflicted on the *Roman Empire*, and how heavy and sad the hand of men, and their yoke was upon them, by those bloody and cruel tyrants, who for most of those times were set over them, who would not come under the sweet and desirable yoke of Jesus Christ in his offer of the Gospel; there being no histories can shew such a *series* of visible monsters as most of those were, excepting *Trajan*, and few else, who then successively were advanced to rule, so as in those two ages, when the Church Historie might be read in *Characters* of blood, and such continued sufferings of the Saints, the tragedies of the *Romane Empire* might be as obvious and have as large a room in the Records of that time,

Sect. 22. IT was in those trying times, we may see a singular providence of the Lord, to secure that blest unvaluable Record of the Scriptures, and particularly that of the New Testament in all the parts thereof, after its delivery to the Church, beyond the possibility of hazard, or access for obtruding any false transcript; so as then, and in all after times, the Churches

of

of Christ might even with the greatest advantage of rea-
on and moral inducements be assured anent the *Canon*,
nd what is truly Canonical and what not; 1. By the swift
nd astonishing conquest the Gospel then had in so short
time, through most of the known world, so as in
he age of the Apostles, not only in *Asia*, but places most
emote, where famous Churches were planted, there was
ecessarily enforced, a diffusing of innumerable copies
f the original, the *Greek* then being so universally known,
even whilst the *Autographs of the Evangelists and Apostles
ere still extant in the Church; as Tertullian shewes they were
n his time, who lived in the second centurie*: And it is sure no
other way could they make use of, for delivering of the
Doctrine of Christianity, or instructing the people there-
nent, but from those pure fountaines themselves, which
hey had to shew as their Authority & warrant; for the Do-
trine of implicite faith was not then known; but all ex-
resly called to search the Scriptures. 2. By those sharp and
extreme persecutions the Church then was under; when
o profess the Christian faith, and suffer for the same, was
every where so inseparably linked, as could not but en-
force each Christian to a near and personal converse with
hat inestimably divine Record, for having some copie
under their reach, to know the solidity of that Doctrine
which they were to seal with their blood and adventure
on into eternity. 3. By those various controversies and
outbreakings of error then in the Church, with such
heat and animosity as followed thereon, which necessarily
enforced all who loved the truth, to be sure and con-
firmed from the text and letter it self. 4. By that neces-
sity the Church was then put to on the furthest enquiry,
and certainty of what was truly Canonical from the up-
breaking of some counterfeit books, as a special engine
of the Devil to darken the truth, such as the *Acts of Paul*
the Epistle of *Barnabas* and Revelation of *Peter*; but this
pended in the blest providence of the Lord to its further

clearing; being thus after an exacteſt tryal exauctorated by conſent of all the Churches of Chriſt, and what was truly Canonick, more known. 5. By that remarkeable providence for the Churches confirming, of the continuance ſo long of *John* the Evangeliſt after the reſt of the Apoſtles, to ſome more than an hundred years after the birth of Chriſt, as *Irenæus* ſhewes, *Lib. 2. p.* 192. with other ancient writers: Whoſe work was peculiarly given him of the Lord, to ſhut up and ſeal the *Canon* of the whole Scripture; And then lived, when he could peruſe and atteſt the whole books of the New Teſtament, and difference them from any counterfeit writings; that thus the *Canon* of the New Teſtament might be unanſwerably cleared by Apoſtolick Authority; which *Euſebius* expreſly ſhewes alſo from the teſtimony of the moſt famous writers of thoſe times, how on the earneſt deſire of the *Aſiatick* Churches, the whole of the New Teſtament was confirmed by the atteſtation of *John* thereto. 6. By that ſingular advantage, in the Counſel of the Lord for preſerving his truth, that the Doctrine of the Goſpel by the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, was delivered over, not only in writ, but in ſuch a form of ſound words for the Church to keep cloſe by, as left no liberty for after times in the leaſt to alter the ſame. 7. From the Chriſtian Church, being ſo abſolutly founded in the whole both of faith and practice on the New Teſtament, as well as the Old; So as with the firſt ſpreading of the Churches of Chriſt among the Gentiles, it may be ſeen, the ſame uſe, and continued improvement of thoſe Records was as neceſſarily required to know the certainty thereof; as *Britain*, or any other Kingdome can have of thoſe fundamental ſtatutes, and Lawes, on which the verie ſtanding and ſafetie of the nation moſt leanes; For though the validitie, or ſure convey of ſome private Record might poſſibly come under debate, where there is not evidence enough to demonſtrate the contrair; could any judge, or

have

have the least hesitation thereanent, that the *Isle* of *Britain*, or the *German Empire*, were not to the furtheſt ſecure, anent the certainty of thoſe ſtatutes and ſecurities, with which their greateſt intereſt and propertie is in a manner incorporate, and indiſſolubly conjoined: ſo as not to know from one age to another the undoubted truth and Authority thereof, when ſuch conſtant and continued uſe in application of thoſe in the whole concerns of the nation, is ſo undeniable? 8. By that providence in directing thoſe divine Records, and delivering them over to the Church, not as a publick monument to be kept only, but for each private Chriſtians uſe and comfort whereon they muſt live and feed in their journey through time; ſo as it may be truely ſaid, not particular Churches alone, but that innumerable company of Chriſtians diſperſed through the world in thoſe firſt times, were the common library of thoſe bleſſed Records; though with the firſt planting of ſome of the Churches, ſome part thereof could not be ſo ſoon ſpread amongſt them, as the reſt, being the laſt of Canonick Scripture written, which occaſioned ſome queſtioning at firſt by a few, until its Authority was more fully known & received. 9. By thoſe many commentaries and other works on the Scripture ſo near to the firſt times of the Goſpel, which were then publickly ſpread, and frequent citations of moſt of the New Teſtament, as it may be clear they had the very ſame Scripture, and knew no other than we have now. 10. By thoſe various tranſlations alſo in divers languages, which were ſo earlie ſpread, as the *Syriack* not without ground judged to be in the very firſt century, The antient Latine, which was long before *Hierom's* tranſlation, yea near alſo with the firſt age, as may be evident from our Church-Hiſtorie, with other tranſlations, ſuch as the *Arabick* that though with ſome ſmall differences, yet in ſubſtance contains the whole of the Chriſtian Doctrine.

Sect. 23. What hath in after ages seemed to be great restlos to the Church, and much regrated by many, that so great a want now is of some clear, and particular account from the histories of that time, of the lives and actings of the Apostles after their dispersing through the world, and of the planting of particular Churches; should if serously considered, tend much more to our further confirming in the truth; where all may see so convincing a providence from the Lord, to prevent after times laying that weight on example, or practice of the primitive Saints, which alone must be on the Scripture it selfe, whereto (as it is too obvious) they have been so eagerly prone: The God of truth thus foreseeing, what need there was for the Church in following ages, to be kept off this rock of following the tradition of men, or leaning thereon, more than on those living oracles of sacred truth, that we might know no copie else to write after, no humane Authority to compete there with, but this alone to be the rule and standard, by which the Doctrine of the Church is to be tried, and at whose barre and decision it must stand.

Sect. 24. Yet is it clear from the surest Records of those times with what lustre and advantage, the Christian Church, and primitive Christians then did appear, who were a part of the first fruits of the Gospel amongst the Gentils, and as the first copie taken off that divine original pattern the Scripture it self; such as walk'd in singleness of heart, and in the joy and comfort of the holy Ghost, whose first love is so particularly mentioned, *Rev.* 2: 3. and as *Ægesippus* cited by *Eusеb. lib.* 3. *cap.* 29. shewes, that unto those times, which was that of *Trajans*, the Church of Christ remained a pure and uncorrupted virgin: For such, as endeavoured to corrupt the perfect rule and sound preaching of the word, then hid themselves, in some secret and obscure

place

lace: But though ſuch particular account thereof be anting, as hath been much wiſhed for, yet it is ſure that hoſe viſible realities of the ancient holineſs of that time, nd what a rare ſight then the Chriſtian Church was, of n excellent ſociety, though in the world, yet living uch above it, may to this day be on cleareſt grounds emonſtrable. 1. In that primitive zeall and fervor that as for the ſpreading of the Kingdome of Chriſt through he dark world, and at what a rate, thoſe whom the Lord alled forth on ſuch ſervice, did adventure in the moſt rude nd ſavage parts, with no viſible incouragement, no in-itements, but the ſervice of ſuch a Maſter, which they nore valued, than any trade the merchants of the earth ave, for Gold and Silver; ſo as it is convincingly tranſ-nitted, what a victory ſuch then had over the fleſh, with he world and ſenſual pleaſures thereof; and how thoſe who got the firſt trial of the Goſpel, found it aſſuredly to e a matter of Subſtance, and truth, and no ſhadow; nd put this ſeal thereto. 2. It is known what ſuch then were, in a ſingular uſefulneſſe and largeneſs of heart, for he intereſt of others; ſo as even the corrupt world could ot but ſee thoſe were the common good, and bleſſing of ankind, whom they did thus perſecute; as both *Tertull. Apol. Pag.* 83. *& Euſebius out of Dionyſius L.* 7. *Cap.* 17. o at large witneſs, how convincingly *the primitive hriſtians did appear, not only in the exerciſes of holineſs and rvent worſhipping God, but in thoſe duties of humanitie and mpathie with others, yea not amongſt themſelves alone, but to-ard the Heathens alſo, in owning the afflicted with their help, re-arding the ſick and diſtreſt; not ſcarring at thoſe diſeaſes which ere moſt loathſome and contagious, without reſpect to their wn hazard therein, from the Love of Chriſt.* 3. We may now from the whole conſent of the Hiſtories of that ime, what choice and excellent perſons, many of the an-ient *Eremites*, were, who under thoſe bloody perſecu-ions in the firſt and ſecond Centuries, when they thus

were enforced to retire, did sequester themselves from the world, for the exercises of godliness, and searching out the Mysteries of the Kingdome of God from the Scriptures, yea how far they were from that way, or following such unwarranted Acts of Mortification and abstinence, as the Legends of the Romish Church, did in after times admire and cry up; and hath been an effectual engine of the Devil, to bring the truth of holiness, and what was unquestionably obvious thereanent in the first times under discredit. It is true, they were not of one rank, as the most *Eccles.* writers shew, some keeping together more in Societies, who were indeed Seminaries for the Service of the Church, amidst the sharp persecutions, which then were; others have been more abstract and retired in their living alone, yet this account is most certainly transmitted even of such, how laborious they were in their duty, not idle or laying themselves aside from being useful to others, even to the meanest, where they had access; of the first sort, we find a long continuance in the Church, as it evidently appears with whom *Epiphanius* from his youth was brought up, and gives a most honorable account of them iu his works, and *Ruffinus Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 8. shewes his visiting of those in *Egypt*, and what excellent persons they were, even in that time. 4. We may see, with what lustre of the truth, of Holiness and Simplicity of the Gospel, is the remembrance of those, who then were called *Culdees* in several places of *Scotland*, from their being such assiduous worshippers of God, to this very day transmitted by the most sure and ancient Records we have of that time, who as *Buchannan* shewes in his *Chronicle*, came into the country in *Diocletians* time, being then enforced to flee to these north places from the violence of that persecution, and by a remarkable providence, thus determined for spreading of the Gospel there, whose work was not only convincing in the secret exercises of holiness, but in

publick

ublick preaching did lay forth themſelves, for bring-
ng in the people ſo ſavage and barbarous then, to the
nowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, and for ſome ages after had
viſible ſucceſſion of others, who followed them in this
leſſed work, for whom thoſe times had ſuch veneration,
s their Cells were afterwards turned into Churches,
nd bear to this day their names, who then were among
he firſt Publiſhers of the Goſpel. 5. It is ſure alſo, that
uch viſible realities of the State of the Churches of Chriſt
hen, tranſmitted even to this day, as all may ſee, what
n innumerable company, in theſe times, loved not
heir life to the death, but chooſed the greateſt of tor-
ments for Jeſus Chriſt and his truth, as the *Martyrologies*
f the Church do clearly witneſs, and thus what fer-
ency of love, ſubduedneſs to the fleſh, and the world,
with the lively hope and aſſurance of that glorie to come
did ſhine forth; the truth of which mervellous effects,
muſt convincingly witneſs both the reality of the cauſe,
nd the excellency thereof.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I. THat great event and revolution of providence, when the ſet time was come for giving reſt to the Churches, after ſuch ſore and continued ſufferings, was ſuch, as no ſerious obſerver, but even at this day may ſee as it were, in ſome manner preſent, the very immediate finger and appearance there of God. 1. In calling for one, from ſo remote a corner as *Britain, where Conſtantine then was*, to ſerve his Counſel, in breaking that formidable power of the heathen Empire, when *Maxentius* the Son of *Maximinianus Herculeus*, a horrid flagitious perſon, and avowed adverſary to the Chriſtians, was by the Roman legions

ſet up. 2. In that remarkeable providence of *Maxentius's* being drawn forth, without the gates of Rome with his forces, yea enforced in his flying to take that very ſame bridge for paſſing over the River, which of purpoſe was contrived to enſnare *Conſtantine* and his Army, and ſo joined and linked together for that end, which then fell aſunder, as ſoon as he and his army had taken the ſame, where himſelf with the chief of his followers ſunk down, and plunged like ſtones in the River; a verifying of that truth which the Chriſtian Church then was made to obſerve *That the wicked are ſnared in the work of their own hands*, yea on ſuch an account to ſing the Song of *Moſes* at the read ſea, how the horſe & his rider he had thrown in the ſea, as *Euſebius* and *Socrates*, the firſt of whom lived in the preſent time expreſly witneſs, wherein they have the concurrence of all our Church Hiſtories. 3. Though it is on no Miracles, or extraordinary providences we lean, or muſt lay any ſtreſs, anent the truth of Chriſtianity, who have the Scripture of God, in the *Old* and *New Teſtament* to found on, yet ſince it is unqueſtionable duty to obſerve the great works of the Lord, and to make a diligent ſearch therein, we muſt alſo conſider that extraordinary, and miraculous appearance to *Conſtantine* and his *Army*, which they had of a Viſion in the Heavens in the noon day, before their engagiug with *Maxentius*, of a Pillar of Light, in ſome form of a croſs, with theſe words moſt legible in *Greek* about the ſame ἐν τούτῳ νίκα, *Socrates Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 1. *Euſebius Lib.* 22. *Cap.* 24. About which being much troubled to know the meaning of ſo ſtupendious a prouideuce, he was that night, by an audible voice in his ſleep, ſhewed, that he ſhould cauſe that figure, which was ſhewed to him and his army, to be put forth in his Banner to the view of his enemies; a relation indeed ſtrange and aſtoniſhing. but with that advantage of cleareſt evidence, though by humane Record tranſmitted to

after

after ages, as could almost be sought for the furthest moral certainty of any matter of fact, and may cause this take deeper impression on our Spirits, even in this present time if we seriously consider. 1. That the account hereof (which by no partie within the Church then, or in after times, was called in question) was in a solemn address after prayer, by the Emperour to God, for revealing of himself to him, when he was doubtful and solicitous, to know the true object of his adoration, being then no Christian, though he had some respects to that way, from his Father *Constantin's* Counsel to him on his death bed. 2. That this extraordinary appearance of the Lord, in the calling and the conversion of the first Christian Emperour, hath so obvious a congruity to the first calling, in such a manner also of the great Apostle of the Gentils, the one by an audible voice, with a great light at the noon day, the other by such a stupendious Vision and brightness therewith about the same time, the one thus called to go forth and bring in the nations by the Word of the Gospel, the other to appear and act by the sword against the heathen adversary, yea to bring the first Christian Standard to the field, as a trophy of the Mediators conquest over them. 3. It is clear, how no advantage thus the Romish Church can have, for that idolatrous abuse in adoring the *sign of the cross*; this being an extraordinary providence at such an exigence, expressly directed by the Lord, to shew *Constantine* and his army, they were now called to Act for the Christian interest; and an undoubted Miracle from heaven, to confirm before their eyes what they were so hesitating about, as to the truth of Christianity, yea by such an handwriting in the very Heavens; to shew unto men, that the Heathen *Empire* of *Rome* was then weighed, and at a close: And the time now come of Jesus Christs making himself known to the world in another manner than by sufferings, and taking the fields

in a

in a warlike posture, with garments rolled in blood, against his greatest adversaries. Nor was it then the sign of the cross, but a sight some what like it, and after that fashion, as the Histories do clearly witness; and rather a Character of Christs Name, as hath been transmitted in the ancient coines of *Constantine* and other Christian *Emperours*, in that form, as it is a mark of the Name of Christ, with the words *ἐν τούτῳ νίκα, in hoc Deo vince*, to wit *in Christ ye shall overcome.* 4. The Vision was not to *Constantine* alone, but at the noonday to his whole army, which *Socrat.* shewes *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 1. did so amaze the Emperour, as mistrusting his own sight, he demanded of them that were present, if they saw not the same, which when all were enforced to confess, and were sure thereof, his mind was then setled thereanent. 5. We have *Eusebius*, who lived in the very time, making this publick, whilst many were then alive, who were eye witnesses thereto, and so famous in those dayes, as no passage could have been more known, and easily contradicted, if it could have come under question, whilst the heathens did not then cease by all essayes to discredit the Christian cause, yea we find him solemnly declare, that ere he wrote the same, he had it also by Oath attested from that good Emperour: And it is known what respects both *Hierome* and *Basilius*, with others of the ancients do witness for this *Eusebius*, as a learned and godly man, though some few passages of his History, which were more remote from the time he lived, seem to have been taken with too much credit from others; he was assistant at the *Nicene* Councel in condemning *Arrius*, though by some mistaken, as if he had favoured and owned his way, there being then another *Eusebius* Bishop of *Nicomedia*, who in that very time was an avowed Patron of *Arrianism*: and most different from this *Eusebius Pamphilus of Cesarea.* 6. This also we have transmitted, for the certainty of it in that time, not only by History, but by those ancient medals

and

and coines, some of which I doubt not but are yet kept to this day, and *Socrates* shewes how more then an hundred years after in his time, that that Banner was still kept in *Constantines* Palace, and is it not also convincing, how the truth thereof with the setting up of that standard was then published in the Roman army, whilst *Constantine* might have feared some dividing thus, and falling off of many to the adversary, before the battell, by his so early declaring himself a Christian, and to provoke *Licinius*, with whom he was then joined in affinity, a known adversary to the Christians, if so great a Miracle had not been thus publick and notour, beyond the possibility of debate.

Sect. 2. UPon this marvellous change, which was in the state of the Church, and ceasing of outward persecution, we may have this discovery of the truth and tenderness of the Lord, for his people in that short respite and breathing they then got, that this silence in heaven should be but as for half an hour, *Rev.* 5: 1. And a lucid interval, only to draw their breath a little before a new trial. 1. To prevent a further ruine, which in outward peace and enjoyment of the world, was like to cause in the very power and vital part of Christianity, for it may be astonishing to consider, what ground was thus lost in those few yeares of the Churches rest, both as to the life, and purity of Religion, which under her greatest wrestlings before, had been remarkeably gained. 2. To instruct hereby, that no cessation the Churches of Christ must look for from warre in this militant state, the Church being the party alone, with whom the Devil wrestleth, and then rageth most, whilst the Gospel begins more clearly to shine forth. 3. That it is not still in the same manner this great Adversary will assault, but when restrained to rage by open persecution, then are the most remarkeably trying times of the Church to be look-

ed

ed for, yea some more searching tryals than before; as congruously suted to the condition of such a time.

Sect. 3. When once the Churches were at rest, we see the inbreaking of that flood of *Arrianism* hath its season, and advantage to assault the truth, yea in a short time so prodigiously to spread, and overrun the Christian world, as it seemed to carry all before it; an assault that struck not at the uppermost boughs, but at the very root and being of Christianity: But thenalso may be seen the truths advantage, and the Lords own immediate appearing under such a tryal. 1. In renting the vail off many, to bring them to the open view in this dreadful apostasie, who had not received the truth in love, and might in the dark traded more to the Churches prejudice, than they could after this discovery, yea how here in the earth was made to help the woman, such as only in appearance had owned some profession of the Gospel to drink in this flood. 2. In bringing thus forth that famous *Counceil* of *Nice*, where were gathered most of the grave and godly Ministers in that time, through all the Churches both in the Eastern and Western parts: who had then special advantage for a more publick testimony and strengthning of the Church thereby, in that greatest foundation truth of the Godhead of Christ. 3. Thus did the Lord convincingly witness, though it was in another form by this trial, than what was formerly from heathens, how one and the same Spirit acted in both; so as the cruelty and violence of this party of the *Arrians* against the Orthodox Christians, both in *Egypt*, and amongst the *Vandals* in *Africk*; was almost the same length, where they could have advantage, of the old adversary the heathens. 4. It is knowne, how marvellously the Lord did then own and follow with a blessing the witness of a few under this trial, in contending for the truth

the Churches being kept a live, ſuch as *Athanaſius*; en that impetuous torrent of Apoſtacie ſeemed to over- all, and was matter of aſtonishment to ſee in how short me, much of the Chriſtian World was turned Arrian; the greater the conflict was: the more diſcernably ght the truths overcoming be ſeen, which muſt ſtill out- falshood; yea the Lords calling forth ſome witneſſes n, with much of his preſence and Spirit to ſtand and hſtand at ſuch a time, was not more obvious, than ſe extraordinary providences of their preſervation when like to be ſwallowed up by the adverſarie, as Hiſtories hat time give a particular account of in the life of *A- naſius*.

CT. 4. THat amazing ſtroake of judgment on *Arrius* himſelf the firſt leader of this party, is at- ted by the concurrence of all our Churches Records, h this account thereof, that being called before *Con- ſtine*, who was then at *Conſtantinople*, to retract his mer tenets, and ſubſcribe to the *Council* of *Nice*, he only yeilded thereto, but with an oath declared his be- ying of what he ſubſcribed, whilſt in the very time he another paper of his own with him, in which he had itten & ſubſcribed his own tenets; but coming forth to City in much pomp with many of his followers, who n waited on him, as he came near *Conſtantin's* mercat, ich was about the midle of the City, where ſtood a pillar red marble, a ſudden horrour fell upon his Conſci- ce, upon what he had done, and withall feeling a tendency ſome flux, was enforced to get into a common jacks near t place, where he was taken with a faintneſs, and toge- r with his excrements voided his guts; a great ſtream blood following, the ſlender and ſmall bowels not y falling out, but blood, together with the ſpleen and r, ſo as he there preſently died in this dreadful manner, & ſe jacks do ſome of the writers of the time relate were

ſtill

ſtill to be ſeen then, behind *Conſtantines* mercat in the por
ſhambles; And how paſſengers in their going by, did
to point at this place in remembrance of the miſerable e
of that wretched man: The report whereof was not on
ſpread through the whole City, but quickly through mu
much of the world, cauſing ~~might~~ terror & amazement on his co
federates that followed him. The Emperour by this mea
cleaved more to the *Nicene* creed, ſaying it was now viſi
ratified by ſuch an extraordinary teſtimony of God there
& much rejoiced in it. Thus *Socrates* ſets it particularly dow
with moſt of our Church writers. And is a paſſage (though
this diſtance of time) ſhould be ſtill affecting and remar
able, when ſo evident. 1. How it was in the open vie
and moſt conſpicuous City then in the earth, in ſuch m
ner as could admit no poſſible concealment, or con
dicting thereto by his followers, ſo that thus in the pro
dence of God the report thereof might go as far as the co
tagion had ſpread. 2. Its following immediatly on ſo
horror of Conſcience, and though he was not his own e
cutioner as *Judas*, yet hath it a moſt viſible reſemblance
that ſtroake of judgment, *Acts.* 1: 18. where by the h
Ghoſt, it is ſhewed that he falling headlong burſt aſun
and his bowels guſhed out, the one, who under ſimul
friendſhip had betrayed the Son of God, the other expr
ſly denying him, though with ſome pretended reſpects a
3. What befell *Georgius the Arrian* that violent promoter
this way at *Alexandria*, is likewiſe evident from the Reco
of that time, who after ſuch cruelties exerced on the Ch
ſtian Church there, for purſuing that intereſt, being t
the Emperours Depute in that place, was pulled out of
Church by the Gentiles upon a tumult they made, tyed
a Camel, and thus pulled in pieces, and his body burnt
aſhes; and *Valens* the *Arrian Emperour*, a cruel Perſecuter
the Orthodox (for thoſe cruelties by this Adverſary th
ſeemed to exceed the heathens) was in battel againſt t
Goths wounded, and being carried to a houſe near by, it w

set on fire by the enemy, where he miserably perished, who had but a little before put 98. Ministers in a Ship and burnt them together for their owning the truth against Arrianism, as *Socrates* who wrote near that age holds forth *Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 45.

Sect. 5. That sharp storm, though short, in those times upon the whole Christian Church, under *Julian* the *Apostate*, seemed not more strange and surprising than the convincing necessity thereof, and the Lords tender respects for his people might be clear, for getting thus some new strength and lustre after such withering, and being almost spent in the vitals of Christianity, by that outward peace under *Constantine* and *Constantius*, as from the cleareſt account given of that time, we may see, 1. What tendency to strengthen more than shake the faith of the Saints, this sharp storm of persecution then had. 2. In that discernable advantage, which followed to unite further those amongst themselves with the more warmings of that ancient love that was wont to be amongst them, which through the abounding iniquity of those times of peace had become more cold. 3. In bringing forth a new Testimony to the Truth of the Gospel, and of the divinity of Christ, even amidst those remarkeable essayes had been made by the *Arrians* to darken the same, we have recorded then amongst other instances that of *Marcus Arethusius*, who being commanded to build one of the idol temples he had thrown down, and on his refusal prest to give but for that end some very small thing, to put some dash thus on the Profession of Jesus Christ, he chearfully underwent the greatest of torments, rather than to give but one Obolum or farthing for such an end. 4. It was here also, that conspicuous victory our blessed Redeemer had over this adversary, was brought forth in the view of the World, when in that height of contempt against the Son of God, whilst he was deadly wounded in battel against the *Persians*, he

was made to fall by a Pagan adversary, whose greatest aime had been to set up Paganism in his time, and taking his blood which then gushed out of the wound, in his hand, threw it up in the air with these words *Vicisti ô Galilee*, as is shewed by *Socrat. Lib.* 3. *C.* 18. *Sozom.* 8. *C.* 2. *Theod. L.* 3. *Cap.* 25.

Sect. 6. That stupendious passage is transmitted to us by cleerest evidence, from those times, of an immediate appearance from heaven against *Julians* attempt to rebuild the *Temple* at *Jerusalem*, which in opposition to the Christian Church, he then vigorously set on foot, and for this end did so far comply with the Jewes, as by an edict he gave warrant for their setting about that work, and to have their Sacrifices there as in former times; yea that the charge and expence of the building should be answered out of the publick treasure, as *Sozomen Lib.* 5. *C.* 21. *Socrat. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 17. do at length relate. But I rather here set down the account by *Ammianus Marcellinus* a known heathen writer in his own Words, that *Julian* the Emperour *having enjoined the reedifying of the Jewish Temple; and ordering all the expence thereof from his own treasure, was from heaven enforced to stop, and give this over, the workers who then were setting it on foot being struck with flames of fire, breaking up from the foundation, as they neither could nor durst more adventure upon it.* *Ammian Marc. Lib.* 23. *Sozomen* doth further adde, that beside these flames, the very earth did cast forth great stones, by which many of the workmen were destroyed. The Jewes in great multitudes looking on with astonishment and confusion of Spirit, at such a sight: So as *Julian* upon the certain account he had thereof, was struck with some fear, so as he fully gave over the attempt, and addes, if any will but go to *Jerusalem*, they may see the visible marks of this truth upon that place: of this passage (saith *Sozomen*) we are all witnesses, for it was not in former times, but in this very present age it fell

out

bur. And it is known how about the very same time fire came down from heaven, and destroyed the Temple of *Apollo* and *Daphne*, and beat the Image of *Apollo* in pieces, like to the smallest powder, as *Theodort* shewes *Lib.* 3 *Cap.* 9: 10.

Sect. 7. THis memorable passage doth *Ruffinus* in his Church-History set down near to that time, of a heathen *Philosopher* in a publick dispute at the town of *Nice* with some Christians there, who had a singular advantage in arguing and for subtile evading the strength of those arguments by which he was most strained, untill one in the meeting, an elder then of the Church, as the History shewes, being much stirred in Spirit therewith, craved liberty from the meeting to reason a little with this proud disputant, and though his truth and seriousness in the way of the Lord was convincingly known, though with a very small measure of gifts and humane learning, it put his friends then to fear, lest the Christian cause might be prejudged in so publick an appearance, by his weakness, but he still pressing the same and directing himself to the Adversary begun thus. *In the name of Jesus Christ I require you to hear the truth; there is but one God who made the heavens and earth, and hath formed man of the dust thereof, with a living and immortal soul, who by his word and power accompanying the same did bring forth this whole Creation, and sanctifies us by his Spirit, and he who is the word, whom we own to be the Son of God, taking compassion on fallen man hath become man; was born of a Virgin, and by his sufferings and death delivered us from an eternal death, and by his resurrection made sure eternal life, whom we certainly look for again to be the judge of the world; Believest thou this ô Philosopher*: To which, he being struck with a visible consternation, under the aw and Authority of the truth, then in such simplicity delivered, was enforced to answer, that he confessed the same, and that it was indeed true. To whom that holy Man did than speak. *If you believe and con-*

fess the truth of the Gospel, arise and follow me in unto the quire of the Church, that you may receive the badge and cognizance of this faith by Baptism, which he did, and turning himself to those of his own party then present, said, *Whilst I had to do with words and the reasonings of men, I could oppose words thereunto, but now when I find a power, I cannot resist following the same, I could stand out no longer, but find that man cannot oppose himself to God. Ruff. Hist. Eccles. Lib. 2. Cap. 3.* A passage upon such a publick account could not easily then by this ancient writer have been published to the world, and the place where it was so particularly circumstantiate, without access to the Adversaries of that time to have repell'd the same, if any falshood therein could have been evinced; and indeed a convincing passage for the world to know, that it was not by the greatest advantage of gifts or humane learning the Interest of the Gospel was promoted, but that the Spirit of the Lord, with the meanest instrument, gains more to the Church, than the furthest of humane eloquence.

Sect. 8. IT is a grave and weighty passage also, though in some ages after, which answers well to what goes before, set down by *Matthias Parisiensis* in his History, of one *Simon Shurrina* a Doctor of greatest note at *Paris* about the twelfth century, one of singular judgment and learning, and for sharpness of wit accounted then beyond most of the time, in clearing the most dark and difficult cases, so as he was throng'd beyond all the Masters of the university with a great resort to his lesson. One day when he had most subtilly disputed, and with most profound and strong arguments handled that subject of the persons of the Trinity, but not having access through time to follow forth what he intended, shewed to the auditory that the next day he was further to treat thereon, upon which the report going, occasioned an extraordinary confluence of hearers who were indeed astonished with his discourse, and the great account he than gave of extraordinary parts, so as upon

upon the close he was prest by divers there present that his discourse then might be put in writ, and published to the world, wherewith he was so puft up, as in the dreadful manner of blasphemous insolence he brake forth thus; *O Jesus, Jesus* (though this in a contemptible manner was expreſt) how much have I in this question confirmed and exalted thy Lawes: but if I please to oppose my self thereunto, I know how with stronger arguments as much to weaken and depresse the same, which no sooner spoken than he was presently struck dumb, that for the time he could speak no more, and not only thus: but became a most notour idiot, so as he could neither read nor know what was spoken to him in any rational way, and became as publick an object of derision, as he had before been almost of mens adoration. This is at length by that *historian* set down *Matth. Par. Chron.* 121. *Pag.* 198. with these two convincing remarks also which are there held forth. 1. That at this time school-Theologie wholly was turned to be a matter of wit, and subtil disputing, for ostentation, but not to edify, whilst by such a stupendious providence, and in so publick a place the Lord put such a mark on one who was of greatest repute then in that way. The 2. doth shew some effects it had upon many scholars in that age, not only to enforce a conviction of the truth of Christian Religion, but to suppress the arrogance and insolent boastings which in many then was too discernable, as if the Doctrine of the Scripture stood or fell by their reasonings.

Sect. 9. WEe may see a most convincing appearance, of the Lord recorded by our *Ecclesiastick* writers for *Theodosius* that good *Emperour*, who after *Julian*, was given as a blessing then to the Church, how in his warre gainst the tyrant *Eugenius*, with whom *Arbogastus* the chief leader of his forces, had conspired against *Valentinian* the second, and caused strangle him in his bed; being sore straited in fight, and like to succumb, did than before his army

turn himself to God by prayer, for some evidence of his present help; whereupon such a mighty Tempest of wind was sent, and blew so vehemently in the face of *Eugenius's* army, as their darts were ranversed, and turned back by the violence of the wind, in their own faces, and the enemies broke, and *Eugenius* being hardly pursued fled in to the *Emperour* himself, falling down on his knees for relief, but such was the hot and eager pursuit of the souldiers, as he was instantly killed, and *Arbogastus* slew himself. This Socrates sets down *Lib.* 5. *Cap.* 23. of which miraculous appearance of the Lord; the *Poet Claudian* hath these verses.

O nimium dilecte Deo! cui fundit ab antris
Æolus armatas acies, cui militat æther
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti.

In which passage we may see, what remarkeable difference; by the immediat appearance of God, for confirming his truth, was made obvious to the world, betwixt *Theodosius* and a *Julian*.

Sect. 10. WE see in this time of the Churches renewed calm and peace, after *Julian's* being taken out of the way, those sore intestine troubles and conflicts which then brake up; yea the depths of Satan in his working by a Spirit of error some further length than before, not only by the *Arrian* Party, in denying the Deity of our blessed Lord, but by those dreadful tenets of *Pelagianism*, which then begun to appear in opposing his grace, merit and Satisfaction, and a poison that did more subtilly diffuse itself through the vital parts of the Church: We may convincingly see also that special tender care of the Churches Head over her, and for securing his truth in such cloudy times. 1. By raising up then those excellent lights with gifts and endowments sutable to the service of the time for contending against those adversaries, such as *Augustine*, *Hierom*, *Basilius Magnus*, *Prosper*, and *Gregory Nazianzen*,

s we may see clear from our Church Histories, yea whilst after ages this horrid poison of *Pelagianism* was continued, we find a *Bradwardine* that great light then raised p. 2. It was also obvious for the Churches confirming, ow this sad declining from the truth and corruption in Doctrine, and a declining in the practice and power thereof, did not only break up, but had their growth and advance together, so as each serious Observer might see whence those errours had their true rise and strength. But the truth then had that advantage, that the Spirit f errour, breaking thus up and making such formidable pproaches, was not more discernable then its being expresly foretold by the Holy Ghost in the word, that such a departing from the faith, and giving head to seducing pirits was to be lookt for in those times 1 *Tim.* 4. 1: And uch a tryal was to follow the Church under the New Testament, of grievous Wolves entering who should not pare the flock, yea come that length in falling off from he truth as to deny the Lord that brought them.

SECT. II. IT is most remarkeable and confirming, what we see in the State of the *Jewes* after their dispersion, now in the times of the Gospel, how this people who would not embrace the true Messias Jesus Christ, did so easily follow Impostors, and those who rejected the Messias in his blessed offer to save, was in judgment after, yea often delivered over to embrace a counterfeit Messias for their destruction, so as from some of their own writers, yea the most famous Histories of the Church in former times, it is most evident, the greatest strokes have followed that people since the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple, have been this way which in these instances we may see. 1, Under *Adrians* reign, whilst they could not evite the conviction, that the time of the Messias coming, f it was not past, could not but be instantly near, so as upon the least false appearance they were prone to be

ſtirred; we find that egregious impoſtor embraced by them, whom they called *Bar Cosbah* from that veneration they had then to him, and that this was the ſtarre should ariſe from *Jacob Numb.* 24: 14. and whom they followed to their own ruine in greateſt multitudes, ſo as it is almoſt incredible the account, that both our ancient and modern writers gives of that ſlaughter which thereon followed by the *Romanes*, to have been no leſs than many Millions of that deplorably wretched people, yea how the blood of the ſlain was ſo great, as run like rivers in thoſe places, *Juſt. Mart. Euſeb. Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 6. *Buxtorf. Syn. Jud. Cap.* 36. *Carion Lib.* 3: *Chronic.* 2. We have that memorable paſſage to witneſs this alſo, of their *Moſes Cretenſis*, one who appeared amongſt them about the third Century, giving out that he was ſent to take them through the ſea to their own land as of old *Iſrael* was under *Moſes* leading; and for a year together made it his work through the towns of that Iſland of *Creet*, where he moſt appeared, to perſwade them hereof, and that they ſhould quite their eſtate and poſſeſſions, to follow him, giving greateſt aſſurances that they ſhould be carryed ſafe and without weting the ſole of their foot through the ſea, for which he ſet them a day to accomplish this, whereupon that poor people, eager and confident herein, came with their wives and children in great multitudes to a rock hanging above the ſea, whom he there exhorted to go forward, and that without fear they might forthwith throw themſelves in the ſea; which deluſion they were under was ſo ſtrong, as divers leapt down, and were inſtantly ſwallowed up, and perished in that depth. Whereupon the multitude ſeeing he was but an Impoſtor, turned themſelves in rage to look for this their leader, but he was gone, having inſtantly diſappeared, and was found to be the Devil in humane ſhape, as *Socrat. Lib.* 7. *Cap.* 37. with other greateſt writers relates 3. It is known that paſſage of *David. El David*, whom the *Jewes in Perſia* and thoſe adjacent places then followed as their Meſſias in the twelfth Century

Century, which their own writers do not in the leaſt deny, and that ſtrong perſwaſion they had thereof, as made them gather every where and flock with him; yea to oppoſe themſelves, to the *Perſian* power, from the confidence they had in this their Deliverer, till they were broken and ſcattered, this Impoſter taken and his head ſtruck off by the *King of Perſia's* Order, and the *Jewes* at laſt enforced to redeem their own lives, with a great ſum of money.

SECT. 12. WE may ſee of what ſhort continuance ſome of the choiceſt *Emperours*, for piety and zeal in owning the truth then was, thus the Lord diſpoſing is more congruous to the Churches condition under the New Teſtament, that their favourable blinks and breathings ſhould be of a ſhort time, as is evident in that inſtance of *Jovinian*, that excellent man, who was next after *Julian*, yet lived not out eight moneths; *Marcian* the *Emperour*, who reigned not fully ſeven years, but left behind him great grief to the hearts of all the godly in that time, that ſo choice a prince had ſo ſhort a reign: Likewiſe *Valentinian* the firſt, who ſucceeded *Jovinianus*, whoſe reign though ſome longer then thoſe, was but 13. years, in whom was accomplished remarkeably that truth, that ſuch as honour God, he will honour, yea even in this life, *Valentinian* having for Chriſts ſake loſt his Office in *Julians* Court, and being degraded from any honour there, who a little after was advanced to the Empire.

SECT. 13. IN thoſe ſad declining times from the truth of the Goſpel, and that dark night of Antichriſtianiſm entering upon the Church, we may ſee the ſpecial providence of the Lord in behalf of the Scriptures, that the whole *Canon* of both the *Old* and *New Teſtament* had been ſo publickly owned and received by all parties, both in the Eaſtern and Weſtern Churches, with that univerſal diſperſing of Copies, even from the firſt times through all

those following ages, and in the most remote places o
the earth, as put it beyond possible reach for depraving o
rejecting the authority thereof, yea how in the first Centur
by the *Councel* of *Toledo*, the Revelation of *John* was so
solemnly declared to be Canonick Scripture, and that non
should dare to question this; that as the Jewes have bee
enforced by the blest disposal of God to own their assen
and subjecting to these records of the Old Testament, b
which they are so convincingly judged. Thus also we ma
see by the no less marvellous providence of God, the whol
of the New Testament kept & owned by the *Romish Church*
yea under an invincible necessity, for some profest vene
ration thereto, by which Antichrist is so clearly reveale
and made known, and the sure founding of the protestan
faith, with the greatest fulness of evidence made clear
as they are now forced to gnaw their tongue wit
pain, to see by the clear shining of this light their King
dome so visibly darknod; which when they could not bu
see, even with the first revealing of that man of sin, an
when popery had get to the throne; there was then n
help left, but to shut up these fountaines from the world
ordinary converse therewith. 1. By reason of the inde
pendency of the Greek Churches then upon their powe
where the Christian faith was still owned and adhered t
with some more purity, and thus the preserving of th
Scripture, & the whole of the New Testament beyond the
possible reach to get corrupted. 2. That still in those darke
times, whilst the *Romish* intereſt was at its greatest heigh
the most knowing and learned, who were at greatest ad
vantage to obviat any such design, and had most famili
converse with the Scriture, may be clearly seen, were suc
as kept furthest from the corruptions of the Romi
Church, and appeared against the same. 3. This also
(though in judgment to them) was remarkeably subse
vient to this end, that corrupt application, which their ow
greatest Writers and Schoolmen made of the Scripture

r accommodating it to their interest and design, having tablished the Conclusion before the premisses, their eatest work then was to have the writen word suited to eir way, and to oppose the truth against it self; which t by a Supreme overruling hand tended to their publick wning of the text and the letter of the word, even by ose false glosses they put upon it.

ECT. 14. IT is known from the graveſt histories of those times, what amazing signs and prodigies in a ore extraordinary and unusual way than had ever former- been, did then give forewarning to the world of this tal change, and the bringing forth of that greateſt mon- r of *Antichristianism* to be near; Of which we find the imitive times have had such dread, as put many to pray *o mora, finis*, upon that sad mistake, that they judged the oming of Antichrist should be near to the close of time, cause they knew his final destruction was to be by the ightness of the second coming of Christ, whilst it might ve been as obvious, that the begun working and break- g up of this mystery, had respect to the first ages of the ristian Church. *Avent in* shewes how in *Constantines* time hen outward prosperity began to smile, and great Reve- es were setled on Church-men, how such a voice was ard from heaven most audibly at *Rome*, *Hodie effusum est enum in Ecclesiam. Avent. Lib.* 5. *Sigebert. in Chron.* which *latina* is enforced also to confess, yea most writers do all ve that account, how from the Eight Century for seve- l ages after, what extraordinary and amazing prodigies en were seen, as did astonish and affright the minds of oſt: the heavens seen many times to burn; the sun and oon to loose their light, the starres to fall from heaven the earth, most strange and monstruous births, over- reading of many places with such swarms of locusts, and ose of an extraordinary form, as destroyed most of the ound, great inundations, as *Aventine*, *Nauclerus*, yea

Baronius

Baronius in his Centuries with moſt hiſtories then do hold forth: So as the moſt diſcerning men in thoſe ag looked forth and ſaw the Empire of Antichriſt to be c tainly beginning, and ſome remarkeable work of judg ment then bringing forth on the world.

SECT. 15. SEeing it is undeniable, the greateſt diſcove that ever came to men, is that of the *Goſpel*, a of Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt revealed to us there, a M ſtery hid and ſhut up for ſo many ages from moſt of t world, and that it is ſo clear alſo the greateſt contempt the holy God, that men could witneſs, is the diſpiſing ſo ineſtimable an offer of this great ſalvation, can it ſtrange, that ſuch a delivering up of mens reaſon and judg ment, even to ſuch a height of ſtrong deluſion, as *Anti chriſtian Popery* is, ſhould follow thereon, which is certai ly one of the greateſt and moſt ſtupendious ſtroakes fro the Lord, that ever was inflicted. A Myſtery, whic after much hid working under the ground for ſeveral age did at laſt ripen to its full height, and diſcovery thereof about the *year* 607. whilſt that vile Monſter *Phocas* did tha ſway the *Empire*. Thus was the ſeaſon, when the Pap power got at laſt to the throne, and that *Boniface the thi* by a particular grant from *Phocas the Emperour*, took to him ſelf that title of *Vniverſal Biſhop* & *Head of the Church*: abou which, theſe Remarkes may be convincing from the hiſtorie of that time. 1. That with a viſible decay and declining o Chriſtianity both in the power, and purity thereof, di the revealing of the *man of ſin* find ſo fit and opportune ſeaſon for this: For it was then the going down of the Sun the ſhadows waxing great, with a thick and palpable dark neſs every where overſpreading, ſo as it might be ſeen, er the outward Court of the viſible Church was given to the Gentiles; and Chriſtianity almoſt loſt, as to any publick appearance thereof. 2. It is remarkeable what then fol lowed, as one of the firſt effects of that new *Empire* and

Vniverſal

niversal head-ship over the *Church*, that it was to bring *ristianity*, and *Paganisme* in a Conformity to other, and ft that old *Idolatry* of *Heathen Rome* into a new mould by a blick Consecration of the *Roman Pantheon*, that Temple hich they had for *all their gods*, to be for *all Saints*, as *latina* himself with other Popish Writes holds forth, and en did ordain that feast of *all Saints*, which is *all Hallowes*, be kept through the whole Church. This was the first plication we find of that *Vniversal Supremacy* by the *Romish hurch*, with a visible falling from the worship of the liing God to such avowed Idolatry. 3. What sad & dreadl times those then were to live in, which thus followed n the Christian world; we find the greatest of their own Vriters with such horrour and amazemen seized, that they new not how to express it: Yea but let any read the Reords of those times even of their own Writers, such as *Baniur* in his *Annals*, *Platina*, *Benno*, &c. for several ages hat followed, and it is sure, they must read also a contined *Tragedy* of the State of the Christian World; of blood, yranny, oppression and falshood, which brake loose hereupon; yea a slavery more than *Turkish* imposed both n the Conscience; and Civill Interests of men, by this retended *Popish Supremacy*. 4. It is strange to read what mpression was then upon many of the *Romish Church*, and uch as were most knowing in those times, that certainly *Antichrist* was come: Though of all stroaks from the Lord, hat of judicial blindness may seeme most strange, yet many ould not get this hid, how such publick intrusion into the *mperial Power*, and exalting themselves above Kings and Emperours, did so convincingly answere, to what was oretold of the Man of Sin, and his being revealed; as *Azoius* the *Jesuite Part.* 2. *Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 20. sheweth, this was o ordinary to the Romish Church, as their Popes took pon them to dispose of Kingdoms no less, than of Bishopicks. 5. Thus also in the Providence of the Lord was hat Romish Hierarchy, which had so far subjected the

world

world under it, made manifeſt; that at one time this Mo
ſtruous Body might be ſeen with a treple head, as well
with a treple Crown, and three Popes Contending to th
utmoſt, and at war with one another both by Excommu
nication and the Temporal Sword, ſuch as *Benedict*, *Sylveſte*
and *Gregory*, whom *Baronius* calles a three headed Beaſt
ariſing from the gates of hell, yea whom *Platina* calls thre
wicked Monſters. Nor hath after ages been a ſtranger t
this, how two Popes at once have ſate on that throne, a
thus what a flame the poor blind Antichriſtian world wa
put into, and rent in their adhering to the one ſide o
other.

SECT. 16. IT was no caſual ſtumble, but a convincin
providence may be ſeen therein, that in th
year 854. and in a time, when moſt did not regard th
word, or know the judgment they were under by Scrip
ture Light, there ſhould be ſuch a viſible Embleme the
of the Romiſh State, in a Woman Pope a moſt vile who
getting up to that Throne, to Head their Church, as *Peter*
Succeſſor. This for matter of fact, their own Writer
yea ſuch as depended moſt on the Pope, do expreſly con
feſs, with ſuch particular circumſtances, as ſhewes ther
could be no poſſible concealing thereof, though it b
grievous to this day their reflecting on it, as 1. Her bring
ing forth a Child, and dying in the birth, whilſt ſhe we
in Proceſſion to the *Laterane*, betwixt the Theatre, an
St Clements in a publick ſtreet, as a witneſs againſt th
Adverſary; which the Lord would not ſuffer to be hid
but to be ſet forth to the open view of the World, to kno
what a mother this Mother Church is, and what are he
children; yea with what ſecurity they leane their faith o
the deciſion of ſuch a judge. 2. It is known their keepin
off this ſtreet, and dishaunting it in their Proceſſion
ſince. I know *Platina*, in the relation of this ſhewes th
it was generally received to be true, without being mo
positive

ſitive, But *Marianus Scotus*, *Petrarch in Chronic.* with her ancient Writers of greateſt repute in the Romish hurch, do with the furtheſt of evidence atteſt this, and e cited herein by moſt of our Moderne Hiſtories.

ECT. 16. IT is ſo manifeſt, as there needs no particular inſtances but a view of the whole *Series* of thoſe times, to ſee, what a tragick Theatre moſt of *rope* then became, & for ſeveral ages continued, of blood, oubles, and inteſtine broiles, oppreſſion by Church-en, diſpoſſeſſing Princes of their Temporality by a pre-nded Spiritual Power, both in the Empire, and in all aces, where the Romish Hierarchy did ſtretch it ſelf; a that vaſte expence of blood and treaſure by the con-vance of the Popish Party, which then followed that ng continued warre to regain the holy Land, whilſt der that cover their work lay to gain a further intereſt on the power of Princes and great Men, and for weake-ng the ſtrength of *Europe*. O what a viſible plague was is on the Antichriſtian World, whilſt their eyes were ſo ut, as they could not ſee it.

ECT. 17. THis ſpecial providence of the Lord for his truth in thoſe times, may be moſt obſerva-e, that this great Adverſary of Jeſus Chriſt, should be dged not only by the Scripture and its light, and thoſe nvincing providences againſt them, but by themſelves ſo, and out of their own mouth have ſo convincing a ſtimony that way, as from thoſe writers of greateſt weight nongſt them, is clear; to ſhew that dominion which the ly God, hath over mens Conſcience, as they find an ac-ſer within their own breaſt, whoſe ſentence & judgment ey cannot poſſibly decline, but doth exerce its power on em, even whilſt it is againſt them: For it is evident, what count, theſe known friends, to the Popish intereſt, ch as *Bemo* the Cardinal, *Lusebrand*, *Platina*, *Bernard*, yea

yea *Baronius* himself gives of the *Romish Church* & its *Hierarchy* as might almost justify Paganism considered therewith, and enforce the World to see, that either the Scripture is no the Word of God, or the Romish Church hath made visible Apostasie from the Christian Faith, and turned Antichristian; some particular instances for this, I shall only offer. 1. Of *Gregory the Great* in his Epistles to *Maurice* the *Emperour*, what express witness he there bears against any claime to be universal Bishop, whereunto *John* the Patriarch of *Constantinople* seemed then to aspire. *telling him that by owning such a stile, it might be known the time of Antichrist was at hand, in this imitating* Lucifer, *who not satisfied with what he possest in common, with the whole of the Angels would needs seek after a Singularity above the rest, and in his writing to this* John *sayes, what wilt thou answer to Christ the true head of the universal Church, in that day of judgement seeing thou by this name of universal, thou seeks to enthral the members of his body unto thy self; and again in his writing to the Emperour thereanent, hath these words, Be it far that your time should be thus defiled with the exaltation of one man, Consider that Antichrist shall call himself God, and if ye look to the quality of the word,* universal, *it consisteth only of two words, but if you regard the weight of iniquity therein, it is an universal enemy; wherefore I speak confidently, that whosoever calleth himself, or desireth to be called an* universal Bishop, *is in the elation of his mind the forerunner of Antichrist*. This is the Testimony of that Gregory, who amongst the greatest of their Saints is canonized and is set down in his own Epistles *Lib.* 4. *Epist.* 28. and yea, is insert in the *Decretals of the Canon-law* which Gregory the 13. knew not how to redress, when he found their lot thereby. 2. We have this account by *Melchior Canus*, known Popish writer, anent their *Legends*, that with less integrity and faithfulness were they writen, then the lives of the heathen were writ by their Authors. and Adds, *Dolenter hoc dico multò a Laertio severius vitas Philosophorum scriptas esse, quam à Christianis vitas Christianorum.* Cano

Lib. 11

Lib. 11. *Cap.* 6. *Pag.* 533. and it is known what *Marsilius Patavinus* is enforced to confess in his book called *Defensor pacis*, that the Clergy of Rome was a den of thieves; and the Doctrine of the Pope not to be followed, because it leadeth unto eternal death; And how that famous learned man, *Franciscus Petrarcha* writing in the year 1350. *Epist.* 19. Thus speaks to one of his friends. *Let no evil angel thee, that thou should'st address thy self again to those princes of darkness, to what purpose wouldest thou go thither (meaning* of Rome*) that thou might see good men born down, and evil men advanced, eagles creeping, and asses flying, wolves to be tame, and Lambs to be in bands, finally Christ to be banisht, and Beelzebub to be judge*: But such instances are so numerous, besides such as *Gershom* and *Clemangius*, who wrote that book *de corrupto statu Ecclesiæ*, as one needs but look through many of the known Popish writers, to have a clear witness against Popery.

SECT. 19. WE see in those dark times, when men grew weary of the truth, and were so universally carried off from the simplicity of the Gospel, to fabulous traditions of the extraordinary perfection of some of their Saints, and after miracles and visions, how discernably this became their plague and judgment, no less than it was their choice, yea to what a length, as ever was known in any time, Sathan was then let loose, and had greatest liberty with such a darkning of the air, by that smoke which arose from the bottomless pit, as men seemed to have wholly lost their way, whilst they choosed another guide than the Scripture, the heavens so darkened, that they sought another entry there than by the blood of the everlasting Covenant, yea thought it enough to secure them from going down to the pit, to have the Popes pardon, and to be about outward pennances; yet even then was the truth thus remarkeably confirmed in the midst providence of the Lord, that in those most strange

extra and ordinary things they boasted of, all might see, their being suited to confirm such tenets of the Romish Doctrine, which could not possibly abide the test of the Scripture or its light, nor admit another seal of ratification but from the Devil, as the histories of those times, and their own legends so clearly shewes, by what meanes purgatory, the mass, praying for the dead, the Condignity of works, the use of Images, the adoration of the *Virgin Mary*, &c. first got credit amongst them, By having that visible seal of signs, and lying wonders appended thereto, by which now in the event it is so discernable how those may be call'd the Doctrines of Devils, as they are by the Spirit of God tearmed, 2 *Tim.* 4: 1. not only as they tend to promote his interest and Kingdome; but such wherein his power is no less vigorously put forth, for getting credit thereto, than it was formerly for *Paganism*, as in innumerable instances from their own writers may be clear.

Sect. 20. WHilst thus the Devil was aloft, and so visibly let loose in this great darkness of *Antichristianism*, we may see the Lords marvellous appearing for his latent Church then in Sackcloth, for her being kept alive and fed in such times, which was no false or pretended *miracle*, but one of the great confirmations of the truth of Jesus Christ, given under the *New Testament*: whilst it is so clear, no humane releif or encouragement was then under their view, her tryals more searching and sore, than in the first times of the Gospel from the heathens, and their Adversaries such, for whom most of the Christian world seemed to own a professt veneration; no possible accesse then to embark with such an afflicted and despised party, as the true Worshippers of God in those times were, but at the rate of being a prey to the worlds cruelty, and to make shipwrack of both credit and comfort in their outward state, and whilst such as had

oppo-

posed the truth formerly, as the *Arrians*, *Nestorians*, &c. as well as the present Adversary, with whom they now were enforced to conflict, gained what ground they had by greatest insinuations on the Civil power, and could not endure that test of suffering for their way, had no interest or advantage from this birth had those blest witnesses, whose close adhering to the truth in that long and dark night of Antichrists reign, is even by the confession of their Adversaries transmitted with honour, & sweet and odoriferous scent to this day. About whom these marvellous providences of the Lord for their feeding, and support was then most convincingly evident, That they had the Old and New Testament translated in their own vulgar tongue, which as *Reinerus* a Popish writer, who wrote about the *twelfth century*, shewes, they taught and learned so well, that he hath himself seen a countrey-clown recite *Job* word by word, and several others who could perfectly deliver the whole New Testament, having then such familiar converse therewith, as *Rein. de Valdensibus*: O how wonderful a Teacher is the Spirit of God by the word, in times when all other helps fail; this also was a remarkeable providence for a more safe preserving of the Copies of the Scripture in such dark times, from any possible access to get them corrupted. 2. They wanted not then a continued succession of Ministers amongst them, who had no dependance on the *Romish* Church, with the exercise of Church-government, to which in greatest singleness and integrity they did submit, and this succession of Ministers still kept on, until that blessed raising of the Church after *Luther* and *Zuinglius* appeared, as both *Sleiden* and *Thuan* do fully clear, and how two of those were than sent to the German Churches, to witness their Doctrine was one and the same with theirs, for which see *Morlands* History of the *Valdenses*. 3. How the Church then in her latent and persecute state, was fed, and kept alive, this con-

feſſion of their Adverſaries may ſhew, that their holdi
faſt the truth was in no naked form, but by ſuch viſib
realities of holineſs, & the life of Religion, as did enfo
that conviction on others, they lived on the marrow a
power thereof, and did burn as well as ſhine in tho
darkeſt times, as the ſame. *Reinerus* confeſſeth, *That amon
all Sects that had ever been, they were moſt dangerous, oth
procured horrour by their blaſphemies againſt God: But thoſe
the Valdenſes and Lioniſts had a great appearance of piety,
live uprightly before men, and put their truſt in God in all thing
obſerved the whole Articles of the Chriſtian Creed, only
blaſpeme the Church of Rome, and held it in contempt, where
(ſaith he) they are eaſily believed by the people.* The ſame wi
neſs doth *Jacobus de Riberia* bear, *That thoſe Valdenſes be
ſimple in all things, yet through the excellency of their learni
and Doctrine, had ſuch weight amongſt the people, and we
in ſo great honour, that a man would not hurt his enemy, if
ſhould meet him in the way accompanied with one of thoſe ber
ticks, ſo as the ſafety of all men ſeemed to conſiſt in their pro
ction, thoſe are his words Jac. de Riber. in Collectaneis de ur
Tholouſæ*; holding forth that awful regard, which thoſ
who knew their way and familiarly converſed with them
were enforced to have. 4. It was alſo in thoſe ſore a
flicting times, that the true Church had this obſervabl
advantage, to ſee ſome clear continued ſucceſſion of wi
neſſes to the truth againſt the ſame Apoſtacy of th
time ſtill kept up, ſo as they could trace the footſteps o
the Saints before them, know where their Fathers lef
yea from one age to another hath ſtill been delivered
with ſome pure tranſmitting of the ſame Doctrine by ſom
witneſs, and publick appearance of thoſe, who had gon
before, for which they then were put to contend, thi
is no conjectural thing: but beſide their own Records,
is acknowledged alſo by their Adverſaries, as the ſam
Reinerus a known and famous writer of the Popiſ
Church ſhewes, *That this was one ground, why there was ſuch*
hazard

zard from them, becauſe they had continued longer than any Sect, me ſay from the time of Sylveſter, who was contemporary with onſtantine, but others confeſs (as he ſaith) from the time of Apoſtles. Which was indeed undeniable, that the truth d purity thereof was more ancient, with ſome continu- witneſs thereto, before their corrupt & fallen Church, that it is ſure, Chriſtianity had gone before Antichriſtia- ſm; But upon this ground he was the more enforced ereto, that the true *Valdenſes* was no new upbreaking own the truth, *upon Waldo's firſt appeararing at Lions*, if the tract and ſcent of this clear teſtimony had been efore that, loſt and unperceivable: but was only a more bſerveable increaſe, and upbreaking in thoſe places, ith a marvellous ſpreading thereof, to own the ſame octrine, which had been ſtill in ſome viſible teſtimony ereto continued. 4. It may be ſeen in thoſe diſmal mes, how the Church was then fed alſo by the Rod, d had ſome part thereof of the ſame comforts and allo- ance, of the primitive Church under heathens, ſo as gain and grow, the more they were oppreſt, an advan- ge tryed and known in all the times of the New Teſta- ent, how no connexion in nature is more ſure than is hath been, betwixt the Churches moſt diſcernable gor and luſtre, yea her trueſt growth and perſecuting mes: And as to the ſufferings of thoſe then for ſeveral ges, with the ſore & violent aſſaults they had, and the Po- s giving forth indulgences at the furtheſt rate, and re- itting all ſin to ſuch as would come forth, and take the oſs on them to extirpate this excellent people, whom ey dreaded more than the Pagans, is at large held forth the *Martyrologies* of the Church.

ECT. 21. WE ſee this obſervable providence of the Lord for his truth; by the ſore perſecu- on of the *Valdenſes*, after they had been firſt Excom- unicate by *Alexander* the third at *Lions*, how their en-

forced diſperſion and ſcattering abroad, did tend to th gathering of a great number of Churches over *Europe*, a our Church Hiſtories witneſs, not only thus multiplyin over all *France*, *yea* from the *Alps* to the *Pyrenean* moun taines, but got over to *Britain*, with whom *Wickliff* an many others there, did in the ſame Doctrine and Teſt mony concurre, yea through *Germany*, with ſome place of *Italy*, as after by a more publick united appearanc was in the *Kingdome* of *Bohemia*, the Lord thus marv louſly ſhewing his being God, in determining thoſe ve Counſels and Actings, for the Churches greateſt good which of all would ſeem moſt deſtructive thereto, as they intentionally moved for ſuch an end, that men m know there is ſurely a living Spirit in the wheels, and infinitly wiſe and unerring conduct, in their ſtrange motions.

SECT. 22. IT was a glorious appearance of Jeſus Chri for his truth, that Teſtimony by *John Hu and Jerome of Prague at the Council of Conſtance*, with wh followed thereon in the Church of *Bohemia*; a paſſage remarkeable, and thoſe convincing circumſtances there with, that if judicial induration were not a ſtroake whic refuſeth all cure, and binds where none can looſe, the could have been no reſiſting this conviction by the worl that ſurely it was the Finger of God, and his immedi work, when theſe are conſidered 1. How in a time ſuch darkneſs, and the Romish Church at its greate height, thoſe were raiſed up with ſome more than ord nary elevation of Spirit, and of the Lord ſuited to a pear on his intereſt: *Æneas Sylvius* himſelf, who afterward was Pope, ſaith that with the ſound of their voice, th Spirit of God aſſiſting; the word thundering in them did awake the people out of their dead ſleep, as they ru by flocks to this great light, inviting their neighbour thereto. If any queſtion this ſee *Æne. Sylv. Hiſt. Bohem*

Cap. 35

ap. 35. 2. That this Testimony, even whilst the Church as hid in the wilderness, could not get leave to be d or smothered in a corner, but in the most publick ew, where nothing could be more notour and onspicuous, at the General *Council of Constance*, the orld must be enforced to see, what authority Jesus hrist can put upon the meanest of his followers in their pearance for the truth, yea what another Spirit this is om that of the world, which could thus stand, and ithstand, so impetuous a torrent of universal apo-acy, even there where the united strength of the Ro-ish Church and Empire were at once met, yea by atience and resolution in avowing the truth, overcome eir Persecuters, and resist those allurements of preferre-ent, and a honourable place of the Church, which ere then offered, if they would renounce this Doctrine, o which the same *Æneas Sylvius Cap.* 26. shewes what an-wer they made, that they taught the truth, being the isciples of Christ, and directed themselves according o his Gospel, whilst the Church of Rome was departed om the Traditions of the Apostles, seeking after riches, leasure and dominion over the people; yea *Poggius* se-retary to the said Council, gives this account of *Hierome of Prague*, that being called before the Council, fter he had lyen for a year in a most filthy prison, and etters, and in want of all earthly comfort, where he could either read nor see, *it was incredible to be spoke, how he then nswered, and with what arguments, never spoke any thing un-worthy of a good man, and at last hath these words, O man worthy the eternal memory of men. Pogg. in Epist. ad Leonard. Aret.* 3. That whilst they were sentenced to dy, not-withstanding of the Emperours assurance, and safe con-uct given, an extraordinary presence of the Lord in hat hour of their suffering was thus also made publick; or which I shall insert the very words of these foremen-ioned writers, whom none could suspect or question to

be partial. *Æneas Sylvius ſayes that both of them ſuffered death (though not at one time) with a conſtant mind and went joyfully to the fire as to a feaſt, without the leaſt heavineſs or diſcontent, and at the fire ſung an Hymn, neither have we read (ſayes he) of any of the Philoſophers who did ſuffer with more reſolution. And* Poggius *ſpeaking of* Hierome, *ſaith, when the fire was ſet unto him, he began to ſing an Hymn, which ſhewed his courage, and when the executioner would have kindled the fire behind his back, that he might not ſee it, come (ſaith he) and do it in my ſight, had I feared this, I would not have come here, when I might have avoyded it. And in this manner (ſayes he) was that man rare and excellent beyond all belief, conſumed to aſhes*; and addes: *Neither Mutius with ſo conſtant reſolution endured the burning of one member, as he of his whole body; Neither* Socrates *ſo willingly drunk his poiſon, as he embraced the fire.* 4. That known prophecie of his at the ſtake, turning to the Prelats their preſent, *After an hundred years you ſhall anſwer to God and me*, was then ſo notour and undeniable that upon the money coined after in *Bohemia*, this inſcription was put in the one ſide in Latine, *Centum annis revolutis, Deo reſpondebitis & mihi*; whilſt nothing then of the event could be known, which ſo remarkeably anſwered to the firſt breaking up of the reformation, *Luthers* Appearing being 1517. *and Zuinglius* a little before; and this was *Anno* 1416. 5. Upon this Teſtimony ſealed with the blood of theſe excellent men, ſuch wonderful providences did attend the Actings of that party in *Bohemia*, then ſtirred up to appear againſt ſuch horrid cruelty, yea to adventure not only againſt the Empire, but that whole formidable power of the Romiſh Church in *Europe*, as would ſeem almoſt incredible, if the adverſaries themſelves were not enforced to teſtify this: Eleven battels ſought by *Ziſcah*, with the Emperour *Sigiſmund*, and ſtill with continued victory, and in ſome of thoſe after he had loſt his ſight; yea with that witneſs of the terrour of the Lord upon the one, and an extraordinary Spirit of re-

of reſolution in the other, as enforced ſometimes the adverſary, when all viſible advantages ſeemed to be on their ſide, to flee at the very firſt appearance of the *Bohemians*, nor could give a reaſon elſe for this, but that a terrour thus ſtruke them as they could lo longer ſtand, and at laſt was the Emperour put on ſuch tearms, as to ſuit and ſupplicat for peace, on which *Æn. Sylv. Hiſt. Bohem. Cap.* 46. hath this reflexion *What a ſhame was it, that our age hath ſeen* Sigiſmund *an Emperour, and born of an Emperour whoſe name* Italy, France, Germany *and all* Europ *honoured, and whom barbarous Nations feared, become a ſuppliant to ſuch* Sure it is, the world then and after ages to this day, cannot but ſee ſomething more than humane here, and the immediat appearance of God, for confirming his truth firſt by ſuffering, and after by a Spirit for acting with ſuch ſtupendious providences, as might ſhew there is no ſtanding for the greateſt of the earth, when the Lord awakes to judgment, to plead thecauſe of the oppreſt. This alſowas ſome remarkeableprelude of that great raiſing of the Church, which then was in its approach from under the power and Dominion of Antichriſt.

Sect. 23. IN conſidering the works of the Lord, and his great appearances, both in judgment, and mercy now under the Goſpel to men, this may with aſtoniſhment arreſt our thoughts, the breaking forth at once, & growing up together, of thoſe two prodigies, the foreſt plagues, that ever came on the world, of *Popery and Mahumedaniſm*, which as is clear from the whole conſent of the Records of thoſe times, did meet in the very ſame age, and have their firſt appearance. *Mahomet's* diſcovery being in a few years after that title of univerſal Biſhop, upon *Phoca's* donation, was aſſumed by the Romiſh Church; being thus no leſs diſcernably linked together in the event, than they are in the Scripture, *Rev.* 9. Here is indeed one of the greateſt depths of the judgment of

God known, since the Gospel was sent to the Gentiles, such as hath no parallel in former ages, yet such a visible seal and witness to the truth, and brings those advantages for our further confirming therein, as we may wonder how this is not by most looked on in another manner. See. 1. How both grew up off one root, to wit an Apostacy from the truth and simplicity of the Gospel, yet so as the one was discernably suited to be a stroake, and scourge on the other, and thus see such a fatal conjunction and crisis to be no casual trift, but where each giveth light to the other, for making this strange mystery more clear and intelligible; how judgment followes at the very heels of sin, and gets strength with its further growth and ripening, yea how an unusual manner of sinning, will not want some strange and unusual stroake. 2. We see here the congruity of such a judgment to the condition of the time, that the blood and oppression of the Church of Christ, under Antichristian Popery, should be closely followed with this bloody Oppressor the *Turk*. And whilst most had turned brutish in their Religion, from the pure and spiritual Worshipping of God, to the Worship of *Idols of Gold, and Silver, the work of mens hands*; so savage and brutish an Adversary should be made their scourge. 3. We must see here also, how sore and astonishing the judgments of the times of the New Testament are, beyond what ever was known in former ages of the world, that since the Gospel is the greatest of blessings, which ever came to the dark world, the greatest of plagues should be this way executed, so as we may with amazement observe, how farre those places and people, which hath once sinned away this blessed light from them, as is here obvious, fell not only under greatest darkness anent the truth of God, but from those advantages of natural and moral endowments; which both in *Greece* and *Rome*, whilst they were heathen, was so discerneable, before the Gospel come there; yea how farre thus sunk into

into that dreadful gulf of immorality and Barbariſm. 4. In looking on this ſtrange ſight and appearance of both, we ſee the holy and unſpotted judgment of the Lord, in delivering up mens reaſon and judgment to embrace ſo ſtrange and horrid an Impoſtor, as is viſible both in the *Popiſh and Mahumedan* Religion, and how nothing is ſo abſurd and irrationally groſs, with which a corrupt world will not then eaſily ſuit, and drink in, when they have rejected the truth. And is it not ſeen, how both, in their Religions, founds upon the very ſame ground and Authority, which is a maſs of humane traditions, with ſome fained and lying wonders to atteſt the ſame; both following the ſame method alſo, to have their Doctrine beleeved, and get credit, without acceſs for any further trial, and that under the greateſt hazard, none may queſtion what is thus obtruded upon them.

SECT. 24. IT is ſure, the very immediat appearance of God and his hand may be diſcernable. In raiſing of this *Turkiſh Empire*, and their being extraordinarily called forth on ſuch a remarkeable work of judgment againſt the Antichriſtian world, if we conſider. 1. It was upon the very evening of the Goſpels departure from the *Eaſtern* parts of the world, and at ſuch a ſad period of time, when they firſt brake up. 2. That viſible blaſting of mens Counſel, judgment, and ordinary parts, with the failing of their Spirits and wonted reſolution, where this Adverſary came, ſo as the nations and countries about, which had formerly another appearance, could not then ſtand before ſuch a torrent. 3. The hand of the Lord ſtrong upon them for the ſervice they were call'd about, ſo as they run without wearying, and did not ſtumble, as inſtruments viſibly fitted for their work; nothing can be more clear than this is upon peruſal of the hiſtories of thoſe times.

SECT.

Sect. 25. With what advantage for our further establishment in the truth, may we now look on this strange sight of the *Turkish Empire*, when these are convincingly evident. 1. That nothing can be more gross and absurd, or more visibly tend to debase the nature of man, yea to expose the very name and form of Religion to the derision of *Atheists*, than *Mahumetism* is in the whole of their way, and the *Alcoran* whereon they found. 2. Nor could these ever bring any internal evidence of the truth of their Religion, to convince such who would but admit the use of reason herein, either as to the purity and perfection of the rule, or any subserviency to the glory of God, and solid blessedness of men; both here and in the other world. 3. Such was the undeniable evidence of the truth of Christianity, when this horrid Imposture of *Mahumetism* broke up, as this Adversary knew not possibly, nor durst adventure to deny the same, in the matter of fact, but to essay a darkening thereof by false and lying comments; for it is clear they professedly own our blessed Redeemer, with most of the Prophecies of the *Old Testament*, and history of the Evangelists; yea owns some veneration to the name of the *Messias*, though they deny the trinity, and seek how to reproach the Christian Church, from the differences, and variety of Sects amongst them. For this is undeniable, that the most inquisitive, and knowing of the adversaries of Christianity, whether Jews, Heathen, or *Mahumetans*, could never once attempt to accuse the Christian Church of deceit or falshood in the matter of fact, as it is delivered to us in the Gospel; yea how are the *Jewish Rabbies* racked to evade those Scriptures in the Old Testament, that so clearly point at the sufferings of the *Messias*, by putting some other sense thereon; the truth of that blessed history of the death and sufferings of our Lord being so publick and famous to all their nation, and before the world, as there could be no possible questioning thereof.

Sect.

SECT. 26. IT ſurely was no ſtrange accident in nature, but that wherein we muſt look higher to a ſupernatural cauſality, that amazing prodigy which fell out, through moſt of *Germany*, and in other places *Anno* 1501. *of bloody croſſes*, in the true form thereof, appearing not only in publick places and Churches, for many dayes together, but upon the very cloaths of men and women, their tables, linnens, and ſuch things which were of moſt ordinary uſe amongſt them, as almoſt all our modern hiſtories particularly ſhew, yea how for a time theſe could by no poſſible meanes be waſhed off, *Franciſcus Mirandula* treats particularly about it, and how not only *Maximilian the Emperour*, was ſtruck with aſtoniſhment there at, but his ſeeing them with his own eyes alſo; it is not tranſmitted to us what impreſſion this ſtrange thing had upon men in that time, but ſure it is convincing and obſervable. 1. That ſuch, who had in an idolatrous way ſo much looked after this ſigne, and made it the object of their adoration, ſhould have it given them as an afflicting prodigy, and this is remarked by the hiſtories of that time, how a dreadful famine within a very little followed thereon. 2. It was under that badge and cogniſance, we find the Romiſh Church did uſually draw forth Multitudes, to make ſlaughter of the followers of Chriſt, and made ſo ſubſervient to their deſign, for ſhedding the blood of the Saints, as in the hiſtories of the *Valdenſes* may be ſeen, and now are they in another manner marked with this ſtrange ſign, of bloody croſſes, which but a very little was before that deluge of blood, after the breaking up of the light of the Goſpel, that brake forth through *Germany*, *France*, *and the Low Countries*, and the Lords giving thoſe, who *had ſhed the blood of his Saints*, *blood to drink in great meaſure.*

SECT. 27. WHilſt the dawning drew near of that bleſt day of the Churches riſing, after that dark

dark night of *Antichriſtianiſm*, we may ſee ſome previous advantages moſt remarkeably from the Lord falling in to prepare the way thereof. 1. That in the preceeding age, the knowledge of the *original languages* begun to break up, and ſome inſtruments eminently fitted for the ſame; humane learning did in ſome further meaſure revive. 2. Many excellent men of rare endowments then brought forth, beyond what had been known for diverſe ages. 3. But which ſhould be moſt convincing, how then *Anno* 1440. or there about, that rare invention of *printing* broke up, as a bleſt and promiſing preſage, to tell the world, of the near approach of that time, when the Temple of God ſhould be opened in heaven, and the Bible, which had for ſo many ages been ſhut up, be univerſally ſpread, and thus made acceſſible, for the pooreſt boy, or maids having familiar converſe therewith, and to have it at the eaſieſt rate; yea for bringing forth thoſe works to the world, in defence of the truth, and promoting of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt, which no pen could ever have poſſibly reached, without the advantage of ſuch a ſingular mean given of the Lord for his Churches uſe, ſo that the thing it ſelf was not more marvellous, and remarkeable than the time, and ſeaſon of its being brought forth, yea as thoſe inſtruments of ſlaughter, the *gunna* by the invention of *gunponder*, did obviouſly triſt with that ſolemn time of judgment, when the *Turkiſh* power was let looſe as the ſcourge of God on the Apoſtate world; this excellent mean of printing ſhould fall in ſo near with the ſeaſon, and appointed time of the ſpreading of the Kingdome of Chriſt, when men ſhould run to and fro, and knowledge be increaſed.

It will not be unſuteable, ere I paſs this, to give in here ſome inſtances of ſuch choice inſtruments for knowledge and learning, who were then raiſed up a little before the dawning of that bleſſed Reformation from Popery, as Pioners to prepare the way of the Lord. 1. As *Rhegio*

Mon-

Montanus, who died in the Year 1470. One of great knowledge in the Original Languages, and who had ſuch love to the Scripture, as that he wrote the whole New Teſtament in Greek with his own hand. 2. *Rodolphus Agricola*, who died 1465. ſingularly learned in Philoſophy, Greek and Hebrew Languages, which he ſtudied with a ſpecial reſpect to the knowledge of the Scripture, did much lament the Churches darkneſs under which ſhe then lay, and expreſly owned the Doctrine of Juſtification by faith in Jeſus Chriſt. 3. *Weſſelus* borne at *Groningen*, and of deſerved renown at that time, both for his knowledge in the Languages, Lawes and Divinity. At his death, as at length by *Melchior Adams* is ſhewed, when he was asked by a friend how he did, he anſwered, his caſe but conforme to his age, & ſinfulneſs of his diſeaſe, but one thing he was troubled with, which was a being toſſed with doubtings anent the truth of Chriſtianity, but ſhortly after, when his friend returned, with great expreſſions of joy, he ſaid, Now bleſſed be the Lord, for all theſe doubtings, and reaſonings are gone, yea I know nothing now, but Chriſt and him Crucified, he dyed 1489. 4. *Moſſilanus* Profeſſor of the Greek Tongue at *Lipſick*, one of ſingular candour, beſides his great knowledge in the Original Languages, yea in thoſe dark times moſt convincingly pious alſo, as his Epiſtles made to the learned of that age, can witneſs: I judge it edifying to ſet down here, what account he gave of himſelf, with much piouſneſs ſometime before his death: *Let not God, to whom all things are known, be gracious to him in the laſt chock and conflict with death, if he hath not from his youth with great care been concerned, to wrong the fame of none unjuſtly, yea contemne the honours, pleaſures and profits of this natural life, and hath not made this his one thing, to have his Spirit kept from being defiled with the pollutions of the world, and risen up to Jeſus Chriſt the alone fountain of wiſdome and knowledge,*

ledge, for being influenced and watered by his Spirit: This I have had continually in my thoughts, have revolved in the night, this with all earneſtneſs I have contended for, yea hath been firſt in all my deſires, to wit, leſt that ſhould be wanting, which was to that rich man, who came to Jeſus Chriſt, (when he gave ſuch an account what length he had come) of the faithful improvement of thoſe Talents put under my hand, I can ſay, I had no other ſcope nor intent, but this in my life: for if I had purſued pleaſures, honours and greatneſs in a world, which might have been unſucceſsful for ſuch an end, I had taken an other way. He dyed *Anno* 1524. At the very breaking up of the Reformation. 5. I ſhall but further add that notable learned man *Capnio*, who dyed 1521. *Stephanus*, *Eraſmus* truely learned in the languages, and a ſpecial *Critick*, for collating the moſt ancient Copies then extant of the New Teſtament, whilſt printing was but of late broke up in the world.

Chap. III.

Sect. 1. IT was at ſuch a time, that bleſſed day began to dawn of the *Churches* delivery from that darkneſs and bondage of *Antichriſtianiſm*, under which for ſo many ages the truth had been in bonds, and the witneſſes thereto enforced to Propheſy in ſack cloth; when nothing could have been more ſurpriſing and improbable upon all viſible grounds; that the immediate appearance of God herein, and its being his work alone, might more eminently ſhine forth. A time, when 1. The Romiſh power was in its greateſt height and ſplendor, under which almoſt the whole of the Weſterne Parts did bow, when the Empire and Nations about was ſo viſibly ſubject and devoted thereto; and whilſt *Leo* the 10. did reigne, the moſt magnificent

and

and ſplendid Pope of any had gone before. 2. When thus the Chriſtian world was under ſuch darkneſs, with that implicite relyance on the Romish Church, as there needed no more, but for the Pope to ſend one of his Emiſſaries, if he deſired money, with a patent for indulgences and be confident thus to get in a vaſte treaſure, as the ſaid *Leo* did, in Commiſſionating *Texelius* a *Friar*, who met with that ſucceſs, as in each City where he came, he was met by perſons of all ranks in Proceſſions, and Magiſtrats of Towns, the Popes grant being ſpread forth in parchment written in Letters of Gold was carried before him, and in that manner received, as the Church Hiſtories shew, as if our bleſſed Redeemer had come down to the earth. 3. A time, when every where the Chriſtian World was ſo ſtrangely ſubjected to blind Superſtition, their Conſcience, as well as perſons under the aw and dread of the Romish power, and of thoſe Legendary Wonders and Miracles, which were then ſo continually noiſed, and apparitions of the dead to be delivered out of purgatory; then was that time alſo, when a Standart was diſplayed for the truth, and that Jeſus Chriſt met his enemies in their greateſt ſtrength.

Sect. 2. THis may be further convincing and manifeſt, what diſadvantages the firſt ſtirrings of that glorious Reformation had, and what a ſtrong tide of oppoſition went againſt it, if we Conſider. 1. How this was to purſue a change in Religion, and pull men from a way, in which they and their Fathers had for ſo many ages been rooted. 2. To purſue this with ſo viſible an oppoſition to their carnal eaſe, and delights in the flesh; to which the Popish Religion was ſo ſpecially ſuted. 3. When ſuch a party was to contend with, as was publickly owned by the example and countenance of the greateſt Princes and Monarchs of the earth, and had thoſe viſible advantages for engaging the World, as the baites of honour, richeſs

and preferment, whilst the alone strength of the Reformed Churches then was prayers and tears, and in the naked truth and simplicity of godliness. 4. Whilst thus the Reformed Religion did ly under that scandal to the world of the Cross, contempt, a low and afflicted state, yea no visible encouragements to commend the wayes of the Lord to any, but the armes of their warfare Spiritual, yet mighty through God, whilst the strength of their Adversaries was carnal, and followed with what in an ordinary way, and on grounds of humane reason, might seeme insuperable; so as a learned and judicious man upon *Luther's* first appearance, shewed him, that it was unquestionably the truth he bare witness to, but was in vain for him, or any such to adventure further, when nothing else was left, but to retire to a Cell, and pray, *Miserere mei.*

Sect. 3. WE see, what a remarkeable calme of outward peace, not in *Germany* only, but most of the Nations about did then tryst with the dawning of this day, when the truth began to shine forth, after that long night of Antichristian darkness on the world; yea how this for some little time continued, both in the close of *Maximilian* the 1. his reigne, and entry of *Charles* the 5. that thus the voice of the Gospel in the blessed providence of the Lord, might with the more advantage, get a publick hearing amongst men, and without that disturbance of the noise and confusions of war; as it was also most remarkeable, at that blessed, blessed time of the manifestation of the Messias, yea thus not only the earths being still and at rest for a short time; but a restraint also upon the rage and fury of men to persecute, untill the seed sown had begun to take some root, and a people prepared for the Lord. So as we find no remarkeable violent assaults, or hot persecution in *France*, until the reigne of *Henry* the 2. nor in *Germany*, and other adjacent places, for a time there, *Charles* the 5. being upon politick grounds, and by reason of that friend-

friendship he had for the *Duke* of *Saxony*, (but by a supream over-ruling power) engaged for a little to some moderation

Sect. 4. IT was then a new face began to appeare on the world, and whilst so great a harvest was neer; the Reapers also prepared such a rare concurrance of instruments for the service of that day, as all might see, it to be the work & immediate power of God. 1. By such remarkeable variety of gifts suited to the service of that time; and for what the Church then needed, not only to perswade and apply the truth to the Conscience, but those sent forth who were mighty in the Scriptures, as well as fervent in Spirit, to convince and informe, as in no former ages had been known, since the times of the Apostles. 2. What choice and wailed instruments such were, who were thus called forth not to publish the Doctrine of the Gospel only, but to contend for it against all Opposers, with the furtheſt advantages of humane learning, as well as divine, as might indeed put the world to enquire, whence had those come, when a few such in an age formerly would have been a wonder and amazement. 3. It cannot be denied, but the calling of such Instruments in the entry of the Reformation was in part extraordinary, and is clear 1. How in no ordinary way those could ever have adventured to answer so great a service, as they were then sent upon; or had the least promising appearance of such success, as after followed, to be an incitement to their worke. 2. That power and authority of God they went forth with, as all might see some thing more than humane in it. 3. The hand of the Lord made strong upon them, to goe forth upon his call, & leave all to follow him, who might otherwise have had such advantages of credit and ease in the world, which without some extraordinary enforcement upon their Spirits, could not possibly be understood. And it is clear, that a greater out letting of the Spirit was then, than can be instanced even since the first times of the Christian Church.

Sect. 5. IT is undeniable, that such whom the Lord so eminently made use of in the first breaking up of the Reformation, had no visible bait or incitement from any outward advantage, nor can this be objected to them, who. 1. Were enforced to contend with the greatest Princes and Monarchs of that time, and state themselves in opposition to such, from whom any such interest in the world or advantage could be expected. 2. The Doctrine they owned and contended for so expresly, that of self denial, and to take up the cross, to repress and oppose those inticements of the grandor and outward splendor of Church men, and to shew that the being Ministers of Jesus Christ, was a matter of work and labour, yea of suffering, when a testimony to the truth called for this, which required subduedness and mortification to the flesh; and nothing thus to commend or make disireable their work, but that it was the service of such a blessed Master, and that respect to the recompence of reward, which is above. 3. It is sure, no lucrative designe could be supposed here, in embracing the Protestant Doctrine and Profession thereof, since thus nothing could have been more perswading to Popery, and that way, when such of mean and ordinary parts were so easily advanced to the most gainful places amongst them; but it is known with what sweet, & cheerful contentedness of Spirit those great and blessed Instruments of Reformation, such as *Luther*, *Zuinglius*, *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Bucer*, &c. followed their work, whose outward encouragements were such only as was indispenseably necessary, who might otherwise have had the greatest benefices amongst their Adversaties: but as it was said in the Romish conclave of *Luther*, *Bestia hæc non curat aurum*: they were enforced to see, that it was some greater thing, than Gold or Silver, that influenced such in following the Lord. And what was it that should cause that excellent man *Peter Martir*, quite all his places and preferments in *Italy*, when he was Prior of a considerable Monastery at *Luca*, made

General

General Viſitor of one of their orders, and in ſuch favour with the greateſt of the Romish Clergy, for following the work of the Miniſtery; and chooſe an uncertain and ſuffering lot elſe where? Alſo *Muſculus* that worthy ſervant of Chriſt, after he was choſen Prior of a Monaſtery, where he had been, to quite all for the truth, and come to *Strasburgh* in a mean condition, where for a time he was brought to that ſtrait before he was known, as to dig in the Town ditches, with a ſweet ſubjectedneſs of Spirit herein, who might have lived in greateſt outward pleaſure and advantage otherwiſe. It could be no lucrative intereſt, that enforced *Vergerius*, who had been the Popes legate in *Germany*, in the ſtate and condition of a Prince, and expecting to be a Cardinal, to forſake all his hopes, and upon his greateſt hazard to preach the truth, againſt which formerly he had ſo much appeared. And to ſhew there is no ſtanding before the power and Authority thereof, he, whilſt deſignedly writing againſt the truth, was converted to the knowledge thereof.

Sect. 6. WE ſee, whilſt that time was once come of the Lords appearance for his Church, this providence made conſpicuous, that the greateſt engine which had been to fixe the Popish intereſt, & keep the world under ſubjection thereto, ſhould be the firſt mean of its fall and breaking, to wit, the Pop's power for abſolution, and remitting of ſin, by which his dominion over the Conſciences of men had got the deepeſt root; upon which *Luther* that great inſtrument in the hand of the Lord was firſt called to appear againſt Popery, when *Texelius* kept ſuch a market in *Germany* to put the Pop's *Indulgences* to ſale; to whom *Luther* (then but an obſcure perſon) went requiring in behalf of Chriſt, the grant of one of thoſe *Indulgences*, but was rejected, without he gave money for it, pretending the Pope had need thereof, and by no importunity of thoſe that then were preſent could be perſwaded herein,

a providence which may call us to these grave Remarks. 1. How the Counsels of Adversaries are oft determined to bring forth the very contrary effects, and *the wicked snared with the work of their own hands.* 2. How discerneably the Lords time of working is, when it may be least our time of expecting. 3. From how small, and very ordinary things to appearance, have the greatest revolutions of providence about the Church had their first rise.

Sect. 7. THis the world was enforced to see, how the truth & Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, when once it began to break up in the first times of the Reformation, did then offer it self to the publick light and trial of all; to be known & searched out in what their greatest Adversaries could object; yea this with a most solemne and publick reference to the Scripture, and the pure primitive times of Christianity. Thus may all see, how those blessed Instruments in the Reformation, *by pureness, by long suffering, by the word of truth, by the armour of God on the right hand and on the left* did oppose themselves to the adverse party: thence were those famous meetings for publick *disputation*, which at length are recorded in the late histories of the Church, where the truth did so convincingly Justify it self, with that prevalence and Authority on the Consciences of men, not only to break the Adversaries Confidence, and force the weapons out of their hand, but to enforce an open confession of many, yea to a publick Reformation also by the Magistrats in most considerable Cities, and this without timult or blood. As, 1. At *Zurick* 1525 set down at length by *Hottinger* in his *Ecclesiastick history*, with that marvellous change that then followed, in abolishing the *Masse*, Idolatrous Images, and setting up the true Worship of God. 2. At *Baden* 1526. whereon followed such a publick Reformation through that Countrey, so as Abbacies and Monasteries were given up, and their revenues applied to Colledges, and such publick uses

3. At

3. At *Bearne* 1527. *December* 17. where the Senate and moſt of the adjacent Clergy were preſent, was that ſolemne publick appearance for the truth by diſpute, whereon followed (after by the preached Goſpel, for ſome time before, the truth had been getting ground on the Conſciences of many) ſuch a total abolition of Popery, and ſetting forward an effectual Reformation, as the day and year was by publick order in gold Letters ſet upon a pillar. 4. That memorable, and ſolemne meeting at *Geneva* 1534. *May* 30. where *Farellus* and *Viret*, with ſome others of the Proteſtant Church there on the one ſide, with ſome of the moſt learned of the Popish Doctors on the other, did in that great confluence meet, where after much ſerious diſpute and conference, ſuch was the bleſſed event and Authority of the truth upon the Conſciences of men, as not only tended to a more ſolemne, and univerſal Reformation through the City, with an inſcription of the year and day, by a publick decree on a plate of braſs: but which was moſt remarkeable, that thoſe Adverſaries themſelves, who moſt oppoſed in the diſpute, particularly *Chappuſius*, a learned *Dominican*, and others were ſo overcome, that by a rare example of Candor and ingenuity, they made publick Confeſſion of the truth. This at length may be read in that excellent diſcourſe of learned *Spanhemius* called *Geneva Reſtituta*, and ſeveral other writers. And it is clear, whatever falling off ſeemes this day by many to Popery, it is upon no debate, or by arguments to convince the judgment, but that their greateſt ſtrength and advantage, is the ſad abounding *Atheiſme* and ignorance of this time, yea that thus Prophane and licentious Spirits do find ſo favourable a retreat and patrociny in that way.

Sect. 8. IS it not undeniable to the conviction of all, how ſuch a *cruelty* hath been exerced by the Popish Adverſaries in theſe late perſecutions of the Church, as no former times, even under the moſt ſavage of *heathens*,

gives a paralel, yea ſuch, as a moſt viſible incitement and power of the Devil could only be underſtood herein. *Inſtances* are ſo innumerable, as it might be a work by it ſelf to inſert, which the moſt grave and known hiſtories of the late times gives account. Nor is it ſtrange, why the *Popish cruelty* ſhould even be a length beyond that of the *Heathens*, ſeeing it was againſt a greater light, and in a more expreſs way doing violence to the Spirit of God, in diſcoveries of the truth to their own Conſcience. I ſhall but give this ſhort touch, what that *Maſſacre of Paris* was, which went through moſt of *France*, where ſuch aſtonishing things are in all hiſtories thereof given, as we ſhould judge humane nature, though corrupt, would ſcarre, and be affrighted at; how they ſpared not infants in the cradle, nor in their mothers womb, the ſtreets covered with mangled bodies, and their blood runing in the high wayes, nothing almoſt to be heard, but the cries and groans of the dying, with that hellish noiſe and shoutings of the Murderers: yea this, where they could pretend no perſonal provocation in the leaſt: one of thoſe horrid wretches ſnatching up a little child, whilſt it ſmiled on him, and began to play with him, did kill it forth with, and threw it in its blood into the River. At *Trois*, the blood of the ſlaine Proteſtants run ſo violently forth out of the priſon doors where they were murthered, as it run through the channel into the River, and turned it into the colour of blood, which cauſed an horrour to ſome of their own way. And at *Lyons*, where moſt prodigious cruelties were uſed by *Mandelot* the Governour, that when ſome Papiſts after went into the priſons, where the ſlaughter had been, and ſaw ſuch a ſight of dead Corps, and in what manner mangled and hewed in pieces, as ſome had no part of humane ſhape remaining, were enforced to confeſs, that ſurely theſe were not men, but Devils in the likenſs of men, who had done this, as moſt grave Writers of that time atteſt: nor was theſe things in any private way, or in a corner done, but ſuch as the

Adve-

Adverſaries could never offer to contradict in the matter of fact. For that late amazing *Maſſacre* in *Ireland* by the Irish Papiſts there, to which they were moſt preſſingly incited by their Prieſts and Church-men, it is ſo known in this age, as if it were yet preſent before us. But beſides thoſe let any read *Paulus Servetus*, that famous excellent *Venetian*, though profeſſedly Popish, his *Hiſtory of the Spanish Inquiſition*, what could be more of cruelty and ſtrange engines thereof, if Infernal Spirits (as ſuch thoſe may be truely called) were ſitting in that bench of the *Court of Inquiſition*.

Sect. 9. That hath been with the furtheſt evidence made clear, and a truth now of ſingular uſe for the Churches ſupport and ſtrengthening, that no humane power or force could yet ever undo that bleſſed intereſt of the Reformed Religion, though put forth to the furtheſt againſt the ſame; but that it hath ſtill in theſe late times gained more ground by the moſt formidable aſſaults and oppoſition, than by the greateſt calms. Anent which, theſe particulars I ſhall in a few words here offer to be conſidered. 1. What a remarkeable iſſue all the Counſels, expence and cruelty of *Philip the 2. of Spain* had, to bear down the riſing of the Goſpel in the *Netherlands*, which at laſt by the marvellous appearance of God for his Church there, did moſt effectually tend to the eſtabliſhment of the united Provinces, and as it was then obſerveable, how at once the riſe, and outward flouriſhing of that commonwealth, and their owning the intereſt of God did moſt viſibly goe together. 2. How immediate the appearance of God was for counteracting that formidable & united confederacy of the *Catholick League in France* in that time, to the conviction of the world, and how all their eſſayes and Counſels did at laſt reſolve in their own ruine. 3. I ſhall here give *Eraſmus* Obſerve upon this in one of his *Epiſtles*, *At Bruxels* two ſuffered for the Reformed Religion, would

you know the product thereof, (ſayes he) *That City which had been moſt free of thoſe, found quickly ſuch to ſpread amongſt them moſt diſcernably, yea what ſhall I ſay* (ſaith he) *both here in* Holland *and every where, where violence is once exerced againſt thoſe of the Reformed Religion, it tends but to their further increaſe.* With which I would add ſome words of *Farellus* in a Letter to *Zuinglius* in the year 1525. which are indeed weighty. *Si unquam ſeſe obtulit lætitiæ & gaudii ratio propter perſecutiones, ejectiones ob Chriſtum nunc quam maximè: nam quid quæſo intentatum relinquunt impii, ſcire velim vel unam rimulam ſupereſſe, qua pios aggredi poſſunt, quam non ſint perſcrutati. Verum ſi Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos.* To wit, *that never was there more true cauſe of joy and gladneſs, than now is under ſadeſt ſufferings for Chriſt, for what hath the Adverſary untryed, I would know, if the leaſt chink acceſſible, by which they might trouble and aſſault any of the Saints in this time, which they have not narrowly ſearched: But ſince the Lord himſelf is for his people, it is enough* 4. I ſhall but further mention for this ſome words of that famous late Hiſtorian *Thuan* in his Epiſtle Dedicatory to his Hiſtory to *Henry* the 4. *We are ſufficiently taught by experience, that neither the ſword, the fire, exile or proſcription can in the leaſt do the turne againſt the Reformed Religion, but tends more to put it forward, yea how in this Kingdome, the more they are purſued, the more their number and authority growes, and rather ſeems to loſe ground, when they have moſt outward peace. It is* (ſaith he) *worthy of remarke the report of one here amongſt us, when brought to the ſtake, to be burnt for owning his Religion, how he ſung a Pſalme, while he was bound to it, ſo as both the fire and the ſmoake breaking forth upon him, did ſcarce interrupt this; and when the Executioner a little before was kindling the fire behind the place where he ſtood, that he might not ſee it, he ſaid to him, Come and let it be kindled before me, for if I had feared this fire, I needed not to have come hither, but could eaſily have eſcaped.*

SECT. 10.

Sect. 10. THus hath the Lord appeared in theſe late ages of the Church, that almoſt no Kingdome, or place where *Popery* hath this day its power and advantage, but there alſo hath the truth had an eminent triumph, and a publick witneſs given thereto, ſealed with the blood of the Saints. As that account the Church Martirologies give of the ſore perſecutions 1. In *Spaine*, where at one time in *Seville* 800. Chriſtians were under Inquiſition for the truth, and 20. burned in one fire, with a particular relation both of the torment and conſtancy of ſuch in many notable inſtances; as that of *Iuliano*, who had been moſt inſtrumental to get many *Bibles*, that were printed in *Germany*, in the *Spaniſh Language*, both conveyed and ſpread through *Spaine*; but being taken at laſt, was thrown into priſon, where he lay three years, for the moſt part laden with fetters, though neither pain, threatenings, nor extremity of the rack did in the leaſt cauſe him faint, but when he returned from the rack would ſay to his fellow-ſufferers; *they depart vanquiſhed and flie with ſhame*, & at his death, with a cheerful countenance exhorted thoſe that were to ſuffer with him, to be comforted, ſince *now was the houre for them to witneſs for God, and his truth before men; & within a few hours, we ſhall have him to witneſs for us, and triumph with him for ever.* Likewiſe *Pontius* a learned and pious man, who with great reſolution ſuffered for the truth there. And that excellent young man called *Ferdinando*, a member of the Congregation at Seville, whoſe torments both on the rack and trough he ſo cheerfully endured, though in that manner ſhaken, that he could not goe, but was dragged into his priſon, and after to the fire, beſides many others, diverſe choice women, yea ſome of great quality, who ſealed the truth there with their blood. 2. What a conſpicuous victory did the truth have alſo in *Italy*, thoſe famous witneſſes, who ſuffered there, both in *Ferrara* and *Venice*, amongſt whom was that choice Gentleman *Anthony Ricceto*, to whom the *Venetian* Senators offered to free his eſtate of

ſome

ſome morgage it was under, beſides his liberty, if he would retract his confeſſion, which he reſolutely refuſed. *Franciſcus Sega* and *Spinola* alſo perſons conſiderable, and of note there, who thus reſiſted unto death for the truth; Yea at *Rome*, it ſelf beſides others we have theſe notable inſtances; one of that rare Gentlemen *Algerius*, who ſometime lived at *Padua*, whoſe relation he gives himſelf of the unexpreſſible comforts and joy he had in his priſon, is at large ſet down in our Martyrologies, was tranſported at laſt to *Rome*; where after many aſſaults and perſwaſions to recoile, he moſt ſtedfaſtly embraced death, and was burnt there alive. Alſo *Johannes Mollius*, a moſt eminent Preacher of the Word, whoſe publick confeſſion and appearance for the truth he at laſt ſealed with his blood in the ſame place. I ſhall but add that paſſage further of *Barth. Fontius*, being called from *Venice* to *Rome* upon the Pop's publick faith given for his ſafety; but after his reſolute adherence to the truth there, and confeſſion thereof, was moſt cruelly put to death in the year 1538. as that account given in a Letter to *Bullinger* thereof, doth at more length ſhew; as alſo that after his death there were many, even at *Rome*, remarkeably ſtirred up to appear for the truth and own it in his roome.

SECT. 11. WE may ſee amidſt thoſe remarkeable wreſtlings, the Churches of Chriſt then had for the truth ſome ſore and ſearching aſſaults, that almoſt met at once, both by that out breaking of the Spirit of errour in *Germany*, from the dreadful party of the *Anabaptiſts*, ſo ſtrangely then let looſe, and the decrees and hot perſecution by the Emperour which then followed there, anent which I ſhall but ſet down a part of two of *Luthers* Letters to Worthy *Melanthon*, whoſe Spirit was then much ſunk under the weight of theſe, firſt as to the *Anabaptiſts*, he thus writes, whilſt he was in his *Patmos* being forced to retire. *They pretend to have revelations from the Spirit, and conferences with God. I commend not thy fears, and ſeeing theſe*

bear

bear witneſs of themſelves, they ſhould not be regarded for that but as John *ſaith, try the Spirits my advice is. that ye try whether they can prove their calling, for God never ſent any, but being either called by men, or declared by ſignes, no, not his own Son, and in no wiſe to accept an aſſerting of their call by a naked revelation. The Prophets formerly had their power according to the Law and Prophetical Order, as we now by men. This is eſpecially neceſſar unto the publick function of preaching, and that ye may try their private Spirit, ye may try whether they know anguish of mind, the new and Spiritual birth, to be exerciſed about death and hell, if you hear all things from them ſmooth, & pleaſant, though they call it devote and religious, and ſhould ſay, they have been ravished into the third heaven, approve them not, becauſe they want the ſigne of the Son of Man, the only prover of Chriſtians, and ſure ſearcher of Spirits. would ye know the place and way of talking with God, it is here; as a lyon he hath broken all my bones, and I was caſt forth from his face, my ſoul was filled with ſorrowes, and my life drew near unto hell: try therefore, and hear not a glorious Jeſus, unleſs you knew he was crucified.* Thus doth that great man wtite *Tom.* 2. of his *Epiſtles.* A ſecond Letter he wrote was upon their ſharpe threatenings and apparent hazards of that time, whilſt *Melanthon* gave himſelf to weeping, and in much anguish, not for himſelf, as he profeſſed, for he knew what he believed, as for the poſtority, to whom *Luther* hath theſe words, [If this be the cauſe of God, and not of man, all the burden ſhould be caſt on him, why doſt thou afflict and torment thy ſelf, ſeeing God hath given his Son for us, why do we tremble or feare? will he forſake us in ſmaller things, who hath given us ſo great a gift? Is Sathan ſtronger than God? Should we feare the World, which Chriſt hath overcome? If the cauſe we contend for be not the truth, let us change; but if the cauſe be holy and juſt, why do we not credit the promiſe and faithfulneſs of God? Its ſure Sathan can reach no further, but this preſent life; but Chriſt reigneth for ever under whoſe protection the truth now is, he will

not

not faile to be with us unto the end. If he be not with us, we &c
I beseech, where shall he be found? If ~~he were~~ not of his Church, do ye think that the Bishop of *Rome*, and our Adversaries are of it? We are indeed sinners, bnt Christ is true, whose cause we have in hand. Let Kings and Nations threaten and fume as they please, he that sitts in heaven shall laugh them to scorne, he hath maintained his cause hitherto without our Counsel, and so he will do unto the end.] See this at length in *Sleidans Com. Lib.* 7. Thus we see, how the Lord was pleased such different wayes to exercise his Church and people then, and from what airth they had their encouragement alone, when all visible props were most broke under their hand.

SECT. 12. IN Considering this great work of God about his Church in these last times, we may see how not at once, but by a gradual advance and renewed conflicts, with much wrestling hath the truths advance and victory over *Antichristianisme* been brought forward, yea what changes has thus gone over the Church, with most remarkeable trials and extremities, that hath been the very entry to most surprising enlargements of her comfort and outgate. Which for our strengthning and establishment in the truth, to see thus both the Scripture and event thereof in these providences now before our eyes, I shall touch but a little in some grave and weighty Remarkes hereof. 1. That the Lords opening a great and effectual doore by the Gospel to his Church, hath in these last times so discernably still had such great opposition therewith, as almost it will be hard to find any where, or at any time, where these have not kept together. 2. That no sore and pressing assault by *Antichrist* & his followers we have seen was put on foot against the Church, but might be found in the close and issue, to have put her interest forward, and for the furtherance of the Gospel. 3. Though thus, even with the incoming of the tide, such dark hours, and renewed conflicts

erwe

were in that manner often, as made the riſe and advantage of the Reformed Churches to be the alone object of his peoples faith & not of their ſenſe, it is moſt convincing & clear alſo, how *Antichriſts* fall and judgment, in the various ſteps thereof, muſt be in ſuch a manner looked for, & expreſly by the Scripture held forth, with a peculiar reſemblance to that judgment with *Pharoah*, and the *Egyptians*, of whom he appears to have been a *type*; with theſe judicial ſtroaks of induration on both, and gradual procedour by one plague after another; yea this with the ſame product and effect; not to ceaſe, as *Pharoah* then did for purſuing that quarrel, & with renewed aſſaults after any reſpite from judgment, untill the holy God doe once for all make his power known, as at *the Red Sea*. And bring forth that bleſſed victory, when the ſong of *Moſes* and *the Lamb* ſhall be ſung together. Nor ſhould it be ſtrange, if moſt immediatly before this, then the darkeſt hour, and moſt sharp aſſault from Antichriſt may be expected; yea which with ſome aſſured Confidence from the Scripture, and providences of this time compared therewith, I may adventure to write, now is this time. and preſent approach thereof, before a greater height of that promiſed victory, than any which hath ever yet been known over Antichriſtian Popery, be brought forth.

CHAP. IV.

IN this dark hour now on the Church, which almoſt every where is afflicting and ſad, & ſo many ready to ſtumble and faint, it might be of greateſt uſe and weight to bring neer our thoughts, and have this ſtill kept in ſight, what an undeniable & marvellous witneſs from the Lord hath been to the publick cauſe and Doctrine of the Reformed Churches, for confirming the faith of his people herein and convincing of others; yea how in diverſe inſtances the Lords

Lords way in the inbringing and building his Church' in these last times, may be seen extraordinary and *miraculous*, as I shall breifly touch in these following *sections*.

Sect. 1. That *swift progress and Conquest*, which the truth then had in this great day of the Gospels triumph, and what interest it got for the fixing of those famous plantations of the Church through much of *Germany*, *France*, *Switzerland*, *Holland*, *Denmark*, the *Low Countrie*, with *Britaine* and *Ireland*, in less than 40. years time, with which these things are observable. 1. How the truth of the Gospel then *came not in word only, but in power and in the holy Ghost, and in much assurance*, 1 *Thes.* 1: 5: Assurance of faith and understanding anent the truth, and with the seal of the greatest enlargement of joy and comfort; so as *the receiving of the word in much affliction was with joy of the holy Ghost, vers.* 6. 2. That in this blessed way and truth of the Reformed Religion now owned and profest, the Church did receive the Spirit, and so innumerable a company in these last ages were sealed thereby, which is that undoubted seale and attestation from the Lord of his own truth and the Doctrine thereof. so expresly promised to his Church under the *New Testament*. 3. That this high spring tide of the power and efficacy of the word was after so sad and visible a restraint had been for many ages before, while Antichristian darkness had overspread the visible Church

more

but what of the work of the Spirit was then ~~only~~ known, a private seale on the hearts of the Godly in those times in sack cloth and latent condition in the wilderness; not in any such way, as a publick confirmatory witness to the truth, and with that *evidence and demonstration of the holy Ghost* before the world, as hath been now since the Reformation: after this blessed day once began to dawn, *the Lord did so visibly rent the heavens, and caused the mountains flow down at his presence*, with so solemne a down-powring of the Spirit following the Gospel, as there could be no standing, but Cities and nations were subjected to man

vellou

vellous power, for embracing of the truth. 4. That this great work of God was no transient glance, or for a short time; but for many years, where ever the truth came, did most discerneably accompany the same, not only to affect and convince by some transient flush upon the Spirits of men, but to that solide and effectual change, as had thus a visible transforming into that blessed Image of Christ *by the Spirit of holiness, so as it was given both to beleeve and suffer for his name.* 5. That this assuredly was above all Secondary causes, is such, as the greatest *Atheist* may see, and how little interest Instruments then called forth could have in it, but that it was the immediate power of God, yea such as even enforced the Antichristian world to wonder, and be in a strange amaze, what such a thing could mean, to see this spreading of the truth in so short a time, yea over the belly of mens furthest violence and oppositon thereto, where no outward gain or advantage could be possibly known, so as to them it might loook as some universal enchantment; but then, O then, was *the goings of the Lord seen in his Sanctuary full of Majesty, and the shout of a King in the midst of his people*; the ministration of life and power did attend his ordinances, whilst the Hearers might be seen with their ears and hearts at once arrested under a melting frame of Spirit, and as embracing the word with their armes.

Sect. 2. THis great witness, and confirmation of the truth hath been given thereto since the late Reformation; *that such a remarkeable growth and spreading of the Church and her sorest oppression from men should so visib'y contemporate and meet in the same time*, & this to be the very season of building his house, yea which passeth all natural understanding, when these are so clear. 1. That such sufferings for the truth was not by a few, which could have been judged as some strange and unusual occurrent only: but of so innumerable a company, *who thus overcame by the*

blood of the Lamb and their word of the testimony, and loved not their lives unto death. 2. Who were not in one place, and corner only, where they could all meet and have a joint correspondence with other; but in parts of the earth of so remote distance, yea of several nations, tongues and languages, and these also of such different ages and sexes. 3. Of these so many wise, knowing and judicious, whom none could judge ever to have adventured on so visible a ruine and suffering, without the greatest assurances of the truth, and that undoubtedly it was their interest and up-making otherwise, whilst none then could embrace the truth of the Reformed Religion, but on such tearmes also to embrace a suffering and persecuting lot. 4. That here might be seen not more of constraint from men, than a visible choise and delight on their part to encounter the same, when a confession of the truth necessarily called thereto. Yea (as it is known from the surest Records of the Church since the Reformation) even to a courting of the flames, that they might get a share of that blessed triumph, yea such as have been found to shrink, and sometimes to faint upon the approach of lesser troubles, thus raised above themselves with greatest exultation of Spirit, to quite wife, children, estate and life for the testimony of Jesus Christ, as is not conceiveable without an immediate divine power, and furthest assurance of truth, with some unconceiveable sight and lively hope of that glory which is in another world.

Sect. 3. IT was then, whilst the Saints were thus sent forth as sheep in the midst of wolves, that so visible a fulfilling of that promise of our Master, even to the Conviction of the world, was made out, *Matth.* 10: 19, 20. *When they shall deliver you up, & lead you before Rulers, take no thought, for it shall be given you in that houre what ye shall speak, for it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father, which speaketh in you, and Luke* 21: 15. *For I will give*

you

you a mouth and wisdome, which all your Adversaries shall not be able to resist, or gainsay. Which may be yet matter of astonishment to consider. 1. With what advantage in a grave & serious composure of Spirit such did deport, as were then called to witness for Christ, and with that evidence of the sensible presence of their Master with them, as made them no less a wonder to themselves, than they were to others. 2. How thus the Authority of the truth did appeare, even in the meanest of those blessed witnesses to confound and silence the Adversary with amazement, that as the high Priests, when the Apostles were before them, were enforced to have this remarke, that they were but meane and unlearned men, and took notice that they had been with Jesus. 3. Nor can it be in question with any, who do not shut their eyes hereat, that this could not possibly be of themselves, or ascribed to flesh and blood: But to the immediate assistance of the holy Ghost. Yea nothing could have been less expected in an ordinary way, considering of what rank and condition in the world many of these were, who with the first breaking up of the work of Reformation, were then called to witness & suffer for the truth, of whom we have so sweet & large an account transmitted, what surprising light, strength, freedome of Spirit, and resolution was in that present houre given, where there had not wanted most sensible faintings and fears before. It is a most grave Remarke, and worthy to be noted, which Doctor *Ridly* hath in a letter to *Mr Bradford* whilst in prison, which is this. *It is wonderful to behold, how the wisdome of God hath infatuated the Policy of the world, and scattered the crafty devices of the wise, for when the state of Religion was once altered here, and persecution began to waxe hot, no man doubted but* Cranmer, Latimer *and* Ridley, *should have been first called to the stake: but the subtile Policy of the world setting us a part, first assaulted them by whose weakness and infirmity they thought to have more advantage: but God disappointed their subtile purposes, for whom the world esteemed the weakest, they*

found (praiſed be God) moſt ſtrong, valiant and ſound in Chriſts cauſe unto the death, to give ſuch an onſet, as I dare ſay, all the Angels in Heaven do no leſs rejoice to behold in them, than they did in the victorious conſtancy of Peter, Paul, Iſaias, Elias, *or* Jeremy.

SECT. 4. IT was not extraordinary only, but in ſome manner might be called truely, *Miraculous*, that *Reſolution and Joy*, which attended Chriſtians then in their extremeſt ſufferings, and thoſe comforts of the holy Ghoſt, which they did witneſs. This muſt be acknowledged amongſt the great things of the Lord, and his immediate appearance, in making himſelf thus to be admired in his Saints, thoſe bleſſed ſuffering witneſſes to his truth in theſe laſt times. A *Hiſtory* of that import and weight, which brings in a rent therewith, for confirming the Church in after times, and to the praiſe and glory of her bleſſed Head, as doth to the furtheſt compenſe all that blood (*precious in the ſight of the Lord*) and foreſt wreſtlings of his people. Yea where, 1. Its ſure none can ſuppoſe a diſſimulation, or that this could be a counterfeit or perſonate buſineſs, what thoſe choice witneſſes of Chriſt did then witneſs, of that unexpreſſible joy and comfort they felt upon their ſoul, or that ſuch would then ceaſe to ſpeak the truth, who in that very hour for the truths ſake had chooſed death rather than life, and were ſtepping in upon eternity. 2. Whilſt nothing viſible could be known to give a riſe thereto, is ſuch, that no natural reaſon can comprehend, as if they had foregone humane paſſions: and that feeling, which fleſh and blood muſt needs have of ſuch torments they then endured. 3. Yea, which our nature cannot but abhorre, and ſhrink at, and whilſt life is ſo ſweet and natural for all to ſeek and preſerve, and on the ſmalleſt receding from the truth, deliverance was ſo eaſy to be had, ſure this, (even the moſt profeſt Atheiſts being appealed to herein)

muſt

muſt enforce a conviction of a more excellent Spirit, than that of the world. 4. That this alſo was no product of a diſtempered judgment, whilſt their Adverſaries were enforced to ſee, what ſeriouſneſs of Spirit, meekneſs, tenderneſs and bowels of Compaſſion even towards their perſecutors, without bitterneſs and revenge, ſuch did witneſs in thoſe great ſufferings. 5. What rare examples thoſe alſo were of the reality of holineſs, mortification to the world, and ſubduedneſs to the fleſh, and as a viſible tranſcript in practice, of that truth and Doctrine of Chriſtianity, which they bare witneſs to before men. To give in inſtances to confirme this, is ſome way the more difficult, that they are ſo innumerable, nor can it anſwer here, where I judge it neceſſar to be ſhort, whilſt the Martyrologies of the Church are extant. Some few only I cannot well paſs without a brief touch thereat. 1. That remarkeable and ſweet account, which *Faninus* an *Italian* Martyr, who ſuffered at *Ferrara* gave to ſome, as he was going to ſuffer, who asked at him the reaſon of ſuch joy and comfort he then witneſſed, after ſo many sharp conflicts he had before, and what now he was to undergoe, ſince his Lord and Maſter was in ſuch agony before his death; anſwered, that *Chriſt had ſuffered all thoſe conflicts with hell and death that were due to us, being in our roome, that we might be freed from the pain and preſſure thereof, when called to ſuffer.* 2. That inſtance ſet down at large by *Mr Fox*, in the Book of Martyrs of a faithful & holy Miniſter in *Queen Maries* time, *Mr Robert Samuel*, whoſe cruel uſage in the priſon was ſuch, that he was chained up to a great poſte, ſo that ſtanding only upon one tiptoe, he was faine to bear up the weight of his whole body, and gave him only once a day three mouths full of bread, and as much water, to preſerve him thus for further torment, than for neceſſary food; at laſt, when he was brought forth to be burnt, which was eaſy, to what he had ſuffered before; he related to his friends,

that after he had been thus cruelly used, & for some dayes pinched with hunger and thirst in the greatest extremity, he fell into a sleep, at which time, one cloathed all in white seemed to stand before him, who ministred comfort to him, saying, Samuel, Samuel, *be of good cheere, and take good heart unto you, for after this day, you shall hunger and thirst no more, which accordingly he found come to pass*: Yea he told them, that he had such wonderful comforts in those afflictions imparted from Christ, as he could not in modesty utter the same. During the time of his burning, his body did shine, and looked as bright as new tried silver, to the conviction and astonishment of all that looked on. 3. That notable instance related by *Beza*, and particularly set down in learned *Hottingers* Ecclesiastick History, of one whom *Beza* calls that Christian *Scævola*, though a mean countrey man, that being occasionally present at *Tornay* in *France* where *Mass* was said by a Priest, was so overcome with the zeale of God, and against such horride Idolatry, whilst he was lifting up the *Hostia*, as he went to him, and pulled it out of his hand, throwing it down on the ground, and turning to the people, said, do ye worship such a God as this? Thus being presently taken and sentenced to have his right hand first, and one of his leggs to be burnt in the fire, before the rest of his body, when brought to the stake, did most cheerfully hold forth his hand, and suffered the burning of it, without the least visible appearance of pain, or shrinking: and after this, cheerfully smiling, suffered also his leg to be put into the flame, saying, *O how blessed a step and way is this, by which I am to enter into eternal life.* After which, his whole body being thrown into the fire, he slept in the Lord. 4. I shall here also set down that astonishing example, by the same Author at length set down, which was so publick and famous in the year 1550. of *Gabriel Berodinus*, that blessed Martyr, who was burnt at *Cambray*, who a little before had been much taken with fear and horrour, whilst

whilst a witness to the sufferings of another Martyr, so as upon his being apprehended, did a little shrink in his Testimony to the truth, but after through grace got such recovery, and in that manner strengthned in his soul, as with greatest resolution he choosed to embrace death, yea in that manner, which was to be burnt alive, rather than to recede in the least from the truth; which his adversaries perceiving, and fearing that his speaking to the multitude at the stake might wrong their cause, did order the executioner to have his tongue cut out: But after by an extraordinar, yea miraculous appearance of the Lord, he did not at all cease to speak at freedome, so as he was fully understood, upon which the Magistrat, who was then present, and had ordered this, did severely accuse the Executioner, as if he had not cut his tongue rightly but, though without ground, to whom *Berodinus* answered, to the hearing of many, *that this was not in his power, nor it any way possible to hinder him to speak, and thus to confess the truth.* 5. That English Gentleman *Thomas Haukes*, who for a time had followed the Court, but after the Lord was pleased to make himself known to him, suffered for the truth in *Queene Mary's* Reigne, whose resolution and constancy is at length shewed by *Mr Fox*, yet wanted not sometimes a shrinking in his thoughts at that torment of the fire. And thereupon being pressed by some of his friends, as he was going to the stake, that in the midst of the flame he would shew them some token if he could, how it was with him, and if the fire was not so intolerable, but that therein one might have his mind kept quiet and patient, which he promised, that if the rage of the pain were made easy and tolerable, he should lift up his hands above his head before his death, thus with much quiet and patience of Spirit he addressed himself to the fire, where after he had continued long, and his speech taken away by the flame, his skine drawn all together, and his fingers consumed

with the fire, ſo as all thought he had been dead, *he gave the fore mentioned ſigne, ſuddenly lifting up his hands all burning in a light fire, and with great joy clapt them three times together.* Whereupon there was ſhoutings amongſt the people, eſpecially by thoſe that knew the meaning of it, as the like has ſcarce been heard, and ſo this bleſſed Martyr preſently ſinking down into the fire, gave up his Spirit unto God, in the *Year* 1555. which could not but enforce a ſtrange amaze upon the Adverſary, to ſee what could make ſuch inſufferable pain and torment ſo ſweet and eaſy, as ſome of thoſe, when they were witneſſes to the joy and reſolution of the Proteſtants, when brought to the fire, ſaid it behoved to be from the Devil, who had taken all feeling from them.

SECT. 5. IT is ſure, that convincing ſeal and witneſs to the truth of the Reformed Religion can be hid from none, of *the oppoſition and contrariety of the ungodly world, and Spirit thereof to the ſame.* And thus 1. How ſuch a darkneſs is a witneſs to the light, and the excellency of this bleſſed way may be known by that oppoſition and contrariety of the Spirit of prophanity, and ungodlineſs thereto. 2. So ſtrange and natural an antipathy in acting thus, as from inward principles might be ſeen, with that perſecuting Spirit of the Popiſh Adverſaries to the truth, ſo as they cannot be at reſt, where they have the ſmalleſt acceſs or advantage of power, to purſue thoſe from whom they are forced to confeſs they had no perſonal injury, or incitement that way. Let any peruſe the moſt impartial Records of Church hiſtory in theſe late times, yea let the moſt indifferent onlookers ſpeak but their Conſcience herein, if the moſt leading perſecutors, which have ſtill been againſt the Reformed Church, have not been as viſibly ſtated in oppoſition to the truth and power of Religion. And as *Tertullian* of the primitive times ſpeaks in his Apology anent *Nero*, *The truth*

truth might boaſt in having ſuch open Adverſaries. 3. Thus was it ſeen by what a Spirit, ſuch inſtruments were then acted to exerce theſe cruelties, and with what fury and impetuous violence, as under ſome viſible force they acted, as it might be truely ſaid of many, they were almoſt diveſted of humane ſhape, and viſibly transformed into the Image of the Devil 4. We ſee alſo, when once that great Standart of Satans Kingdome was ſo remarkeably ſet up, for an open warre againſt the Kingdome of Chriſt, after the Reformation, what a more excellent and invincible Spirit did then lift a ſtandart againſt this, before which their Adverſaries could not ſtand; yea even in being overcome how thoſe bleſſed witneſſes to the truth were made overcomers. I ſhall but ſet down two inſtances the one under the *Netherland* perſecution by *Duke de Alva*, of one *John Harwin*, a ſouldier of a moſt diſſolute life, but being once enlightned with the knowledge of the truth, ſo as this change was evident to others, was quickly noticed, and put in priſon, about which the Godly in theſe parts were in ſome feare, conſidering his late beginning, and what his former life had been: but he diſappointed all their fears with cleareſt evidence, not only of a ſound judgment, but alſo how he had profited in the ſchoole of Chriſt; and when he was condemned, as he went to execution. *Said, See here how the wicked world rewardeth he poor ſervants of Chriſt, whilſt I was a drunkard, and player at Cardes and dice, and living in all diſſoluteneſs and prophanity, I was never then in hazard; but no ſooner began I to ſeek after the truth and a godly life, but preſently the world made warre againſt me, and became my enemy, but the ſervant is not better than his Lord.* The other is that famous *paſſage of the Aſſaſination of John Diazius a Spaniard*, after he was enlightned by the truth, and at once through grace began to know the Reformed Religion, and what it was to be a Chriſtian in earneſt; againſt whom his own brother *Alphonſus Diazius* was driven with ſuch a fury, yea in that

deliberate manner also, as under cover of greatest affection he did unawares assault him, and was the instrument of his death, who though by the friendship of the Popish party he was aquite, after he was taken for that fact; yet by the holy Judgment of the Lord was forced to be his own Executioner.

Sect. 6. THe *visible fall and decrease of Satans Kingdome before the truth, when once the light of the Gospel after the Reformation broke forth*, may be convincing and clear, 1. That then Satans binding up and fall did follow from such open reigne, which in former ages he had under the darkness of Popery, by that prevalence of *Ignorance*, *Idolatry*, *Superstition* and *Persecution* against the truth, over the world. 2. So remarkeable a restraint which followed of such frequent apparitions, which had been in former times, of Spirits, giving out that they were the souls of persons departed, and craved help from their friends, of *soul-masses* for their relief out of *Purgatory*. It is, I confess, strange and amazing to think what a darkness this was, and under what an aw and dread by such ordinary converse of the Devil in this manner of his appearance, most of the Christian world were then; yea upon what Authority did the Romish Church lay the greatest weight of many of their *Tenets*, such as *Purgatory*, the necessity of *soul-masses*, &c. though nothing more evidently contrary to the Scripture, which shewes there can be no returne of the Spirits of such as are departed, nor are to expect another Teacher to be sent to us, than the Scriptures of truth. But now since the breaking forth of the light, it might be clearly seen how much these are gone, and Satans power thus under restraint, to Act that part and deceive the world as formerly, though nothing was more ordinary and frequent in those dark times. 3. It is known now by the Gospel, within the precinct of the Church, how remarkeably the *Devil's* power

power hath been reſtrained, from that familiar converſe which was then under ſuch appearances, as of *Fairies*, and otherwiſe alſo Spirits haunting of houſes, ſo as the ceaſing of the Heatheniſh *Oracles* did not more diſcernably follow upon the firſt times of the Goſpel, than this reſtraint of evil Spirits in ſuch ordinary appearances hath followed, even to the conviction of the Popiſh Adverſaries, ſince the late bleſſed Reformation from Antichriſtian Popery. Many confirming inſtances might be given for this. I ſhall here mention one, which is at large ſet down by *Mr Fox* and other writers, of that holy and excellent Miniſter of Chriſt *Mr Tindal*, the firſt Tranſlator of the Scripture into Engliſh after the Reformation, That being at *Antwerpe*, whilſt the perſecution was hot in *England* againſt the truth, he was ſhewed by ſome Engliſh Merchants there of a notable *Magician* in the place, whoſe uſe was at feaſts, or when they uſed to meet at ſupper, to bring to the table what ever wines, or delicious fruit the company would deſire, and ſet preſently before them, with other amazing proofs of the power of the Devil, upon which *Mr Tindal* preceiving what a ſnare this might be to ſome, deſired, that when they met the next time together with him, he might be preſent, without being known what he was, and after they were met, and at table, this wretched *Magician* after his manner began to try his Art, but in vain: for whilſt he had wearied himſelf in following all his ſpells and incantations, and what the furtheſt that helliſh skill and power could do, to ſatisfy the company, he was at laſt enforced to that confeſſion before them all, *there was one of the company that hindred his work, by reaſon of whom he could get nothing done at that time.*

Sect. 7. I ſhall further add this great witneſs and atteſtation to the truth of the Reformed Religion, to wit by *the Spirit of holineſs, and how the power of Chriſtianity*

ſtianity, and love thereof, did at once break forth with th
purity thereof; about which theſe things may be de
monſtrably clear, 1. That with the diſcovery of tha
ſweet and excellent truth of the righteouſneſs of the Go
pel, and the Doctrine of grace in our being juſtified b
faith alone in Jeſus Chriſt, (the cleare breaking up o
which light in theſe laſt times, was as *life from the dead* t
the Church; after a long & dark night of *Antichriſtianiſm*
had gone before to obſcure it. A truth for ſo many age
detained in unrighteouſneſs, that our being juſtified is i
the accepting of Jeſus Chriſt, as he is offered in the Go
pel, & as it is in the caſe of marriage, which conſiſts not i
the ſending, or accepting of gifts: but in the accepting o
the perſon) how remarkeable an enlargement, & outlet
ting therewith was not only of the peace and comforts o
the holy Ghoſt; but of the Spirit of holineſs; ſo as the free
dome of grace leading in to the greateſt tenderneſs in th
walk & practice of Chriſtians, with that native tendencie
which the one hath to the enforcement of the other, di
then viſibly appear, yea that marvellous change with
new luſtre and appearance this did put upon the Church,
with ſuch innumerable and rare examples of holineſ
brought forth, who ſhined in that day in *love*, *humility*,
mortification, *ſelfdenial*, and *zeal* for the intereſt of Chriſt;
to enforce this conviction therewith, that then was th
Spirit given, from the Lord to this Church, and that
wind did blow upon his garden, *when the ſpices thereof did ſen
forth ſo ſweet and fragant a ſcent.*

2. It was then the truth of holineſs, and that this was
no perſonated ſhew and appearance, did ſo viſibly appear
upon trial, in *preferring Jeſus Chriſt and his truth to the world*,
and all intereſts there, when brought in competition
with him. It is ſure, no weapon hath been more made
uſe of againſt the Church, and hath tended to ruine more
than this, that whilſt other ſnares has killed their thou-
ſands, of this it may be truely ſaid, its ten thouſands:
but

but thus the conquering power of Chriſt on the Spirits of his people had ſuch a ſolemne triumph, as that great cloud of witneſſes, who reſiſted unto blood, chooſing to forſake houſes, lands, and all pleaſures and enjoyments on the earth for the truth, may unto this day be a ſtanding witneſs thereto. To give Inſtances of ſuch ſhould be unneceſſary, when the whole ſpeaks this forth. I ſhall touch theſe three remarkeable examples of ſome who had a great intereſt in the earth to adventure beyond others, and the more rare, becauſe *not many noble, not many wiſe*, or of great poſſeſſions here, of whom can be expected ſuch a teſtimony. 1. That famous inſtance of the *Marqueſs of Vico*, *Galleacius Carracciolus*, who a little after the Reformation being one of moſt natural accompliſhments, had what the world could deſire of outward pleaſures, with further expectation of preferment, being the Pop's nephew; yet for the truth did quite all, yea wife and children chooſing to live rather in a mean eſtate, and as an exile in *Geneva*, than in all the fulneſs of thoſe deſireable things that *Italy* could afford. Yea upon his parting with his friends and family, when he was put to conflict with ſo extraordinary aſſault with the weeping and cryes of his lady and children, had theſe words, *Let him be accurſed that preferres all the pleaſures of this world to one hours Communion with Jeſus Chriſt.* 2. That choice prince *John Frederick of Saxony*, when detained captive by *Charles the 5. Emperour*, was preſſingly importuned to cede a little in the intereſt of Religion, and to embrace that Doctrine called the *Interim*, then deſigned for a reconcilement betwixt Proteſtants & Papiſts, by the Politicians of that time, yea this with ſuch a baite of having liberty and reſtitution of his eſtate; did with that bleſſed peremptorineſs, which is becoming thoſe, who ever knew that power of the love of Chriſt on their ſouls, reject all with this returne; *Since the Lord had enlightned my Spirit by the truth, and knew it aſſuredly to be*

ſuch

ſuch, there was no leſs tearmes, whereon I can recede from it than everlaſting periſhing, and ſhould thus condemne what hitherto I have owned and embraced, as the Doctrine of Chriſt; yea even to adventure on the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt. And why do you think I am thus tenacious, to hazard all outward intereſts for adherance to the truth, but that my ſtudy and aime is here, that after this ſad & ſhort time of my continuance in the world, I may reach forward unto an eternal life, and to that unexpreſſible joy that is above. I know by ſome I am defamed, as if it were not Religion, but matter of fame and repute I ſought after: but would any think that theſe could be preferable to me, before my eſtate, liberty, and enjoyment of wife and children with comfort as formerly, and here before God I bear this witneſs, and hope to have confidence herein, when I ſhall be called before his judgment ſeat, I have had no other aime in my publick actings than this, that keeping cloſs by the truth, and way of the Lord, I might attaine that bleſſed inheritance which is in heaven. Thus did that bleſſed *Hero* ſtand and withſtand in ſuch an aſſault, as *Sleidan* doth at length ſhew *Lib.* 20. *Pag.* 260.

3. It is worthy of obſerve alſo of *Henry* one of the Princes of *Saxony*, to whom his Brother *George* one of the *Dukes* of that houſe, having a great principality and eſtate, but moſt bitterly Popiſh. ſent ſome Ambaſſadors in time of his ſickneſs, ſhewing, that if he would renounce the Proteſtant Religion, yea that if he would enſure to make no alteration, to prejudge the Popiſh intereſt in his territories, he on that Condition would make him Heir of all otherwiſe had by Teſtament diſponed the ſame unto *Cæſar* and *Ferdinand* his Brother. To whom this Prince gave this anſwer; *this is ſuch a tentation, as Satan had againſt Chriſt, fall down and worſhip me, and I will give thee all theſe things. But think ye that I would forſake the known truth and purity of Religion for riches?* Nay, he diſmiſſed them with a moſt peremptory refuſal; but ere theſe Ambaſſadors were returned to their Prince, he was departed, and *Henry* went immediatly and entred into poſſeſſion of that eſtat, and reſtored the Reformed Religion there.

3. Theſe

3. These *deep soul exercises*, *brokenness of Spirit*, *yea the terrours of the Law* in greatest earnest pressing down the souls of many Christians then, with that sweet result after in a solide serenity and peace, yea tenderness of walk unto their death, may convincingly witness that weight and power of the truth of godliness such were under. It is true, the Lord was graciously pleased to keep this much off the Spirits of his suffering witnesses, who were then called forth to witness even unto death for the truth: And it might be seen, what a sun-shine of unexpressible joy and light, they were then kept in, midst those sharp assaults; but after the extremity of persecution had some abatement, then were those inward conflicts more frequent. Instances have been so known, as judge it not needful to speak much therein. Two passages only I must touch. One of that rare *English* Gentleman *Mr John Glover*, who suffered, and was in hazard from the Popish party, yet not unto death; which is the more remarkeable, that his Brother *Mr Robert Glover*, who was burnt at a stake for the truth, was not in that manner tried. I shall set down *Mr Fox's* own words in the *Book of Martyrs* of him. *I was twice or thrice with him, whom partly by his talk I perceived, partly with my eyes I saw to be so worne and consumed by the space of five years, that either almost enjoying of meat, quiet of sleep, pleasure of his life, was left him, so that if it had not pleased Christ sometimes to have relieved his poor servant, so far worne, with some seasonable comforts now and then betwixt times, it had been impossible for him to sustaine such torments, the chief cause whereof was, that having been graciously called by the Light of the Gospel, and felt wondrous tastes of Christs Heavenly Kingdome, upon some declineing of his heart after the World, he was affrighted with that Text* Heb. 6: 4. *of having sinned against the Holy Ghost, which so wrought upon him, that if he had been in hell, he could not have more despaired of his Salvation. In this his intolerable anguish, though he had no joy in his meat, yet was he*

forced

forced to eat againſt his appetite, that he might thus deferre the time, as long as could be, of his damnation. But though he ſuffered many years ſuch ſad temptations and ſtrong buffetings of Satan, yet the Lord, who graciouſly preſerved him all that while did at laſt not only free him thereof. but alſo framed him thereby as he being like one already placed in Heaven, and dead to this world, both in words and affections, led a life wholly Celeſtial abhorring all prophane doings, his diſcourſe and words being alwayes ſuteable thereto. 2. I ſhall add here that known and rare inſtance alſo of *Mrs Catharine Brettergh*, who lived in *Lancaſhire*, as her life and death, which is at length ſet forth by it ſelf, ſhewes, what a ſingular, grave and ſolide Chriſtian ſhe was, to the conviction not of a few, but of the place and countrey where ſhe lived, but ſome ſhort time before the Lord called her to himſelf, was exerciſed with ſuch ſtrange inward terrors upon her ſpirit, as all might diſcerne, not by her cryes and complaints only, (though otherwiſe in greateſt compoſure of mind) that ſhe was forſaken of the Lord, but to the affecting her body, bringing it low, ſometimes the ſweat burſting out upon her, ſo as all might ſee what that preſſure and pain was which ſhe had within: the riſe whereof was her apprehended hypocriſy, wanting of that ſeriouſneſs, and being ſuteably earneſt in embracing of Religion; yea that ſhe had not ſo glorified the Lord. eſpecially with her tongue, nor had that ſincere love to him that ſhe ought. Her conflict and terror continued a conſiderable time. ſome of the moſt ſolide and grave Miniſters of that Countrey being oft with her, but at laſt, that bleſſed victory and triumph ſhe got was no leſs marvellous, after the Lord did break in with light and diſcoveries of himſelf. Some of thoſe expreſſions ſhe then had of her comforts, I ſhall but in a ſhort touch here mention, with which ſhe was ſometimes enforced to burſt out: *O the joyes, the joyes, the joyes that I feele in my ſoul! O they be wonderful, they be wonderful! The place where*

where I now am is sweet and pleasant, how comfortable is the sweetness I feele that delights my soul? The taste is precious, do you not feele it? Oh so sweet as it is! And at other times, O my sweet Saviour shall I be one with thee, as thou art one with the Father? And dost thou so love me that am but dust, to make me partaker of Glory with Christ? O how wonderful is thy Love! And oh that my tongue and heart were able to sound forth thy praises, as I ought. At another time she burst forth thus; yea Lord I feele thy mercy, and I am assured of thy Love, and so certain am I thereof as thou art that God of truth, even so certainly do I know my self to be thine, O Lord my God, and this my soul knoweth right well, which last words she again doubled. To a grave Minister one Mr Harrison *then with her, she said, my soul hath been compassed with the terrours of death, the sorrows of hell were upon me, and a wilderness of woe was in me. but blessed, blessed, blessed be the Lord my God, he hath brought me to a place of rest, even to the sweet runing waters of Life. The way I now goe in is a sweet and easy way, strawed with flowers, he hath brought me to a place more sweet than the Garden of* Eden, *O the joy, the joy, the delights and joy that I feele, Oh how wonderful? And as her strength began to faile her, with a sweet countenance and still voice said, my warfare is accomplished, and my iniquities are pardoned, whom have I in heaven but thee &c.* This Ihstance I choose the more to set down, that severals of the Popish party in that Countrey then, did object this against the Protestant Religion, that it had such soul-terrours following the same, but it is not strange, for such as are strangers to the Scripture, to the life of the Saints there, to the truth of holiness on their own soul, that this is beyond their reach, or understanding. Yea a wounded Spirit with those great realities of the joy & consolation of God, by a touch of the blessed Healers hand, is no shew, but found to be in greatest earnest, though he does not in a like manner or measure, thus deale with his people. Here I must add a passage of one of the most grave, judicious and holy Ministers of Christ I knew in the age he lived in, that having been most

of the day before in fellowship with some Christians, who were under rare and deep exercise of mind. He lay down at night in some heavings, and much troubled that he knew not such by experience as those were, but that night in the midst of his sleep, he said (I shall set down his own words from himself, who now is in glory) there came upon me such a terrour of the wrath of God, that if it had increased a small degree higher, or continued a minute longer than it did, I had been in as dreadful a condition as ever living man was in: but it was instantly removed, and then he had a voice spoke to him within his heart and said. See what a fool thou art, to desire the thing thou couldest not endure, and which he thought strange also, that neither the horrour, nor the relief he had out of it, did then awake him out of his sleep till the morning, but the weight and impression of it remained for a considerable time thereafter.

4. It may be evident, not only in those suffering times of the Church since the Reformation, but to this very day, that Majesty and authority, doth attend *holiness*, so as to enforce an aw, and respect on the conscience even of the haters thereof, and their being struck with the conviction of a more excellent Spirit in such (whose zeal and close adherence to the Reformed Religion hath been also most discernable) than that Spirit which is of the world, yea how visibly those did move in an higher Spheare and from other principles than upon any outward interest, and that it was an undoubted product of the Spirit of God. This was so convincing after the Reformation to the Adversaries themselves, that many judged it their interest to have the sufferings of Protestants less publick and obvious, since their deport enforced an awful conviction upon all, that assuredly God was with them; nor hath there any time since been wanting most observeable instances to confirme this. I remember amongst other Remarks of the Church in *Ireland*, a little time before the Rebellion there, I had from a Great

a Great Miniſter of Chriſt, who was moſt inſtrumental in the work of the Lord there, that as he did not think there were more lively and experienced Chriſtians any where, nor was at that time there: and theſe not a few: but in a large number, and ſeverals of them perſons of conſiderable outward ſtate in the world, who were then brought in by the Goſpel, moſt of whom before that change, had been moſt ignorant and prophane: how ſuch likewiſe was their convincing and tender walk, as they were generally reverenced by the graceleſs multitude, yea on whoſe Conſcience was enforced an awful regard of the truth of holineſs, that was ſo convincingly witneſſed in their practice. And then alſo (which was obſerveable) how almoſt no jarre, or jealouſly was to be found either amongſt Miniſters, or private Chriſtians there: But their great contention was to preferre others to themſelves, and in thoſe dayes it was ſweet and eaſy for Miniſters to preach and pray both in publick and private. ſuch was the hunger of their hearers, their food being remarkeably let out to ſo large a deſire and appetit.

Chap. V.

Sect. 1. Beſides that which hath been shewed in the preceeding Chapter of thoſe great *confirmations put to the Proteſtant cauſe* and Doctrine of the Reformed Churches in theſe latter times, yea thus alſo to the truth of Chriſtianity, it being ſure, the Proteſtant Religion is nothing elſe but this, in the truth and purity thereof. It may be further ſtrengthening, and a ſweet Remarke, in this ſad and ſhaking time, to conſider with what brightneſs and luſtre ſo many have gone off the ſtage, of ſuch as have been moſt ſerious, and fervent in the Reformed Religion, in theſe after times, ſince that great fury

and perſecution from Antichriſt hath been reſtrained; whoſe unexpreſſible peace and joy with ſome extraordinary glances then, of that bleſſed eſtate they were entering into, could poſſibly be hid from none, even moſt ordinary onlookers, and with theſe convincing evidences thereof. 1. Of that complacency and joy their ſouls had in the truth they had profeſſed, and their finding the witneſs of their conſcience, and the approbation of God herein ſo ſweet a feaſt, whilſt they were then turning their face to the wall, as it might be ſeen, that inward joy and peace did thus far exceed their outward pain, and more ſenſible to them than their ſickneſs. 2. That ſurely the ground on which ſuch a confidence and ſerenity of Spirit was founded, muſt be ſome thing above nature, and ſuch as was able to bear out under the greateſt ſtorme and aſſault, as all might ſee, here could be no naked ſhew or counterfeit. 3. That thus even here, a more near and ſenſible correſpondence with heaven is known to ſome, than moſt ſeeme to be aware of; yea ſuch as (except men ſhut their eyes) it might be eaſy to diſcerne, how theſe when dying have had the vail in an extraordinary manner drawn by, and been admitted to ſome ſight of that, which themſelves could not poſſibly expreſs, and to know ſomething of an actual poſſeſſion, and thoſe foretaſtes of the glory they were entering into, that can be conceived at a diſtance. 4. How diſcernably this abundant entrance, and fulneſs of peace enjoyed in the dying houres of the Saints hath followed their cloſs adherance to the way of the Lord, and the Proteſtant Doctrine now under ſuch reproach. It is true, that not in a like manner is the Lords dealing with the choiceſt of his people, but ſuch who have ſhined brightly in their day may goe off the ſtage ſilent and with little appearance. I have known ſome, of whom I write this with the greateſt certainty, how their continued walk and practice did ſpeak to all, the the truth of ſerious godlineſs, the bleſſed finishing of whoſe courſe hath ſome diſcerneable reſtraint as to

any

any ſuch appearance then, whilſt the Lords condeſcending with ſuch a viſible gale of ſenſe, & triumphing joy to others, in the cloſe of their life, may be underſtood more with reſpect to ſome publick uſe and import, than for themſelves, as a dying teſtimony and ſeal of the Saints to the truth. And I hope this may be for advantage and edification to ſet down here ſome ſpecial and weighty *Inſtances* to commend the bleſſed way of the Lord, and for confirming others therein; whoſe laſt Teſtament and dying breath, (whilſt their words are of more weight than at other times) did ſolemnely witneſs to this truth and faithfulneſs, by putting their ſeal thereto: Yea ſuch inſtances, as the world may ſee, and have the conviction hereof inforced by this short touch, what is that bleſſed fruit and gain, which followes upon ſerious goldlineſs, when once it comes to an acting the laſt ſcene of death; what another appearance theſe have, and that here muſt be ſomething above nature, yea what rare endowments and parts theſe had, as well as piety, who with ſuch ſweet & odoriferours fragancy hath their remembrance thus tranſmitted; that we may ſee alſo what choice and excellent perſons hath followed, and been brought forth ſince the Reformation from Popery, of ſuch various degrees and imployments, bearing one and that ſame witneſs to the truth. Some of which I have chooſed to inſert here, are out of *Melchior Adamus* a grave writer being in the Latine and theſe books ſo rare, as might be little known or acceſſible to the moſt, for theſe other paſſages, which follow I may with confidence ſay, I have been to the furtheſt concerned anent the certainty thereof, as ſhall be more particularly shewed.

SECT. 2. FIrſt inſtance ſet down is that notable *German Phyſician Joachimus Curæus* borne in *Freaſtadt* who died *Anno* 1573. a man, as of choice and ſingular piety, was of great learning alſo, had his dayes shortned by a burning feaver, in which, as in the whole of his former life, did appeare the ſubjectedneſs of his ſoul, yet with moſt fervent

breathings of love towards Christ (and as its usually found) a most sweet concord here betwixt the conclusion and premisses of his former walk and practice, amongst many remarkeable speeches he then had, and are at length recorded by *Melchior Adamus*, these I shall here mention. *I am oppressed, Lord, but to me it is enough, that thy hand hath done it, my body now suffers because of sin, but my soul is raised and comforted with the assurance of eternal life: but I will wrestle with* Jacob, *untill the brightness of thy light appeare to me. Come Lord Jesus, and let all that love thee, say come, and he that loves thee not, let him be* Anathema Maranatha. *Thou knowest who searchest the heart, I love thee, with thee I shall be at the beginning of this new year, and satisfied with thy sight, and drink of the wine of that ever lasting joy in thy Fathers house, where there are many mansions, and one also is for me there.* And then had these words, which I choose rather to set down in the Latine, having such a sweet *emphasis* there. *I am meum pectus ardet conspectu vitæ æternæ, cujus verè sentio in me initia.* „ „ have learned to know thee, and with some aime to have „ others know thee aright, Son of God, acknowledge me „ also and take me into thy embracements. To come to „ thee, my soul with desire leaps for joy, and because it „ is yet withheld, I think the time long; I desire to be dis„ solved. O dissolve me, that I may be with thee, I am ove„ wearied here I groane for that dwelling above, thou which „ hast revealed to me as the travelling man in a dark night „ looks for the Sun, so do I earnestly look after the bright„ ness of that light, which is in the sight of the Father, Son „ and holy Ghost. Now when my breath and Spirits are „ to faill, let O blessed Saviour, thy Spirit speak and intercede in my soul for me with unutterable groans. I shall „ see my Saviour in the flesh, which is exalted at the right „ hand of the Father, and there bless him for all the blessings I have had from him. Thou wilt also put a guard „ to this body, even thy holy Angels to keep my dust and „ bones, which were, and shall be forever the dwelling „ place

„place of the holy Ghoſt; for it is impoſſible this fleſh and „maſs of my body, which hath been quickned by the out-„letting and communion of the Spirit, and thus ingrafted „into the body of Chriſt, to be annihilat, or to be for „ever continued in the ſtate of death, as a dead maſs: but „thou the Fountain of life ſhalt require from the earth this „thine own Image, even out of the ſmalleſt crummes of duſt „& aſhes that are there; and by ſending forth thy Spirit a-„gain, build up this a glorious and living body, that it may „be for a dwelling for thy Divinity to dwell in for ever. „There we ſhall follow the Lamb where ever he goes. With „theſe words which he adds, *O verè pulchrum. Ducem & Di-„vinum.* There we ſhall ſing a new ſong. Let us rejoice, „Hallelujah. O come let us goe forth to meet our Re-„deemer. Our Converſation is in Heaven: but even in „this life we muſt begin to know an eternal life, and fol-„low in that order Chriſt hath appointed. We ſhall be „cloathed upon, and not found naked; And he who is the „beloved Lamb of God, who takes away the ſinnes of the „world, ſhall lead us to the fountains of living water, and „take all tears from our eyes. What the eye hath not ſeen, „nor the ear heard, nor hath entered into the hearts of „men, is prepared for the Lovers of God. This earthly „life is but death: but that is life indeed, which Chriſt „hath begun in my ſoul; and now I live, not I but Chriſt „liveth in me, therefore I'le praiſe him. O bleſſed ſoul, „where Jeſus Chriſt hath his ſeat, doth lead and rule in all „our motions and actions. I ſee the Heavens now open. „Now let thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have „ſeen thy Salvation. Thou Jeſus Chriſt art my Reſurrection „and life. How lovely are thy Tabernacles, O Redee-„mer? Keep my ſoul that it ſuffer not hurt from that hor-„rible Dragon the Devil, let it be bound up in the bundle „of the living, and my journay be to thoſe who now live „an immortal and heavenly life. Thus is there in part a „touch of the breathings of that bleſſed man before his cloſe,

which the witneſſes thereof ſhew was but ſome part of what he expreſſed, and this with greateſt candour and fervency. And ſaid again a little before his cloſe: *I dye in the Lord, who is my life, and in the acknowledgement, faith and recumbence on Jeſus Chriſt. O ſweet Glory and deſireable Righteouſneſs! O pleaſant change and tranſlation from ſin, into a State of Holineſs, from darkneſs into Light, and from death into Life!* It was obſerved that he had diverſe words prophetical, whereof many Choice and faithful witneſſes were then preſent, who declared alſo that they were exceedingly comforted by him; but needed not comfort him, in whom ſo ſingular a deſire and breathing towards eternal life, with ſuch eſtabliſhment in the faith was diſcerneable to all, and thus at the cloſe he was heard ſay, *Now I dye, and have got Admiſſion, as with old* Simeon. *I die witneſſing to the truth of the Prophets and Apoſtles, and adhering to the* Auguſtane Confeſſion; *bleſſing the Lord that in his marvellous goodneſs had made the light of the Goſpel to returne after ſuch darkneſs.*

Sect. 3. *Sebaldus Munſterus*, one excellently verſed in the Lawes, who made his ſtudy to have his knowledge therein ſubſervient to the publick good, and making peace amongſt others, not his own private intereſt. At his death he ſhewed much patience, being ſeized on by the plague, and a few hours before his cloſe, ſhewing to ſome friends about him theſe dreadful marks of the diſeaſe, that were broke forth in his hands and leggs, ſaith to them, *O what precious marks are thoſe which Chriſt hath put upon me, and how pleaſing are they? Do not you loath at ſuch a ſight, for I am now putting on my wedding apparrel, for as loath ſome as it is, whither I am going to enjoy that heavenly feaſt with Chriſt for ever, yea even in this ſad dreſs do I flitt to that glorious Aſſembly of the Spirits of the juſt above.* Thus as it were triumphing, and full of joy he left the world, when he had got a clear ſight of that which was before him. *Ibat ovans animâ & ſpe ſua damna levabat.* He died at *Wittenberg* about the year 1540.

Sect. 4

Sect. 4. *Franciscus Burgardus a German Lawyer*, also and fervent Protestant, most dear to *Luther* and *Melanthon*, both for his singular learning and piety, of whom that account is given, that his family did represent both a Church and Academy, so as it may be questioned whether serious piety, with prudence and great judgment, did most shine forth? Was heard oft to express upon the complaints of some, what hazard then seemed to attend the truth, that he much rather would choose death, and the greatest of sufferings, than in the smallest point recede herein; about which he was perswaded in his heart. At his death did thus also express himself, when his sickness was very sore. *I esteeme the afflictions of this present time, not to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us, and though I shall now walk in the Valley of the shadow of death, I will not feare, since thou art with me, whose rod and staffe have comforted me.* And with furthest assurance of eternal blessedness did thus part with time at *Wittenberg* 1560.

Sect. 5. *Joannes Clotzius*, Counsellour of Law to the Lantgrave of *He*[illegible] and after by him made his Chancellour, though with great aversion thereto, as reckoning that the greater dignity had most weighty cares, and trouble following the same. One seriously godly in his life, at death had these Expressions: *The whole of my life is placed in God. O let thy Servant depart in peace. Thou art my sure anker, my Salvation, and only refuge to me. Now the honours of the world and all momentany things, yea this life it self is distasteful, in respect of those eternal joyes, and that Kingdome above, to which I breath, and with joyful mind hasten, even where those many mansions are.* And thus most comfortably rendred his Spirit to the Lord.

Sect. 6. *Joachimus Bergerus*, a famous Lawyer and Counsellour to the *Emperour Maximilian*, by whom he was sometimes sent in Embassy to other Princes, whom

Melanchon did so much admire, as he expresseth his fervent desires, that the Lord would preserve such an Instrument for his Church, of whom that account is given. His Religion was a soul-work and business to him, nor did he satisfy himself with a forme of duty, but oft might be seen powring out his heart unto God in prayer with many tears in his family, a rare instance of one in such throng of publick imployments. He was much in converse with the Scripture, not to know it only for light, but to conforme himselfe thereto, as the rule. He used to have these words frequently to others, That on's time should be much, either in speaking with God by Prayer, or have him speaking to us, by reading and meditation. which he had drunk in from his youth: Of singular humility, as a few weeks before his death, he declared, *That besides some desire to renounce the world; he designed to dye a Capital enemy, above all things, to that sin of pride.* And whilst on his death bed with greatest assurance he looked out for his change, using those words of *Job*, I *wait till my change come*, as one who seemed to have no more to do then, but to dy, having been so serious in making ready for it in his former life. This account is given of his words. *Though I be most weak and destitute of outward help, I am one of the sheep of Christ whom Satan by all his power shall never be able to pluck out of his hand: and was sure that no created thing could ever be able to pluck out of his hand: and was sure that no created thing could ever be able to separate him from the Love of Christ, with which he was so firmely united. He had that word as most comforting to him, He is my life, and the length of my dayes* Deut. 30:20. And then after said, *Farewel, O farewel all earthly things, and welcome Heaven. Let none hereafter make mention of the things of this world to me.* And to some of his friends, who were by, did seriously witness, *he never through the blessing of God was more firmely perswaded of the truth, nor had ever found the Spirit of the Lord bearing a more full, and comforting Testimony to his soul for his adherence to the truth, than at that present time.*

as now he found it eaſy, and was in caſe, if he were called thereto, to lay down his life as a Martyr upon that account, which was not eaſy to him before, and withall witneſſed his inward joy, and ſenſe of the Lords tenderneſs to him at ſuch a time, to dimit him out of this priſon, when ſo dreadful things ſeemed imminent upon the Countrey and place he lived in. Thus dyed that excellent man, leaving a ſweet favour behind to all who knew him, Anno 1602.

SECT. 7. *Aſpar Peucerus*, Son in Law to *Melanchon*, and a moſt famous Phyſician in that time, was a man of great learning and piety, and in the bleſſed diſpoſal of the Lord expoſed to much ſuffering upon the Sacramental controverſy with the *Lutherans*, which how ſad ſoever to him in the time, did at laſt reſolve in much joy, and being ſtrenghtned in the way of the Lord thereby. He was kept for many years in priſon, on that account, where he was forced to ſee his profiting more in the knowledge and Love of the truth, than in all his former Liberty; having been of an high, and lofty Spirit until thus he was under the croſs broken and ſubdued, ſo as he bare that teſtimony, *It was good for him, the Lord had afflicted him.* In his priſon he met with hard uſage, and expecting his change by death, his body being ſpent, and brought very low, he wrote his Teſtament, as is at large (and truely edifying) the account thereof ſet down by *Melchior Adamus*, Where he owns the Innocency of his cauſe, exhorts his children to Godlineſs, and Love amongſt themſelves, having amongſt others theſe words, as an enforcement from his own practice: *I commend my ſoul, and the whole of me with daily groanings to God, through, and for his Son Jeſus Chriſt my Lord, in confeſſing of whom by the help of his Spirit, I hope to continue, live and dye, waiting for the coming of our great God our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, ſhewes alſo, that during his impriſonment with a bleſſing from the Lord for it, how he had been kept ſtill unmoved, with all their threatnings

of

of death, or continued reſtraint. And when he called t
mind the death of his choice wife, from whom he w
kept, ſo as he could not have acceſs to ſee her at her death
which affected him with much grief, he ſaid, the con
dering of theſe words of *Chriſt*, *that he who forſakes not F*
ther and Mother, wife and children for his ſake, is not worthy
him, did much help to ſubdue, and bound his affection
herein: he after experienced the Lords marvellous prov
dence both in his delivery, and comfort of his after lo
Outliving theſe ſufferings 16. Years, and attained to greate
honour and reſpect than ever before, ſo as he could ſea
the verification of that truth, *of the Lords making glade h*
people according to the dayes wherein he had afflicted them, a
years wherein they had ſeen evil. He dyed *Anno* 1602. with
moſt ſweet refleshing teſtimony to all preſent, of his aſſure
hope and comfort in the Lord.

SECT. 8. FRedericus Taubmannus borne *Anno* 1565. was
man of great learning and piety, which ma
him to be an ornament to the profeſſion of the truth in th
place and time he lived; was alſo much exerciſed for con
firming himſelf in the way of God, not only in the public
hearing of the word, but in thoſe more ſecret duties, read
ing, meditation and fervent prayer. He had ſome cle
diſcerning of his approaching death, whereupon he ſaid t
his friends, *This I do not fear, let my God call when he will*
I deſire to obey, I know he will never forſake me. And under hi
ſickneſs, when it came upon him, and whilſt his diſeaſ
began to increaſe, to ſome then who were exhorting hi
to patience, he ſaid. *God is faithful, whom I have befor*
now tryed, and at this hour have no cauſe to bring his truth in
queſtion. Let his bleſſed will concerning me take place. In th
evening before his death, being asked what he was doin
he anſwered. *I ly here, I am wreſtling with my Lord Jeſu*
Chriſt after Jacobs example, and reſolve not to let him goe, till h
give the bleſſing.

SECT.

Sect. 9. *Matthias Vessenbechius*, famous for learning and knowledge of the Lawes, which was his profession, a fervent Protestant, and remarkeably called to the knowledge of the truth, when he studied at the *University of Lovaine*, by being a witnes to the sufferings of a poor godly man in that place, for the truth, which put him after to a serious search of the Scripture; had a marvellous delight in a special way to read much of the *Psalmes*, and upon the New Testament: a great Opposite to the litigious wranglings of the Law, and to have truth and righteousnes in that imployment promoted. At his death did witnes much peace and comfort, having oft in his mouth these words of the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 1: 22. *Who hath confirmed us, and given us the seale of the Spirit*, by which we cry Abba Father, and that in *Rom.* 7: 24. *O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death*? Adding the following words as his confidence, that this was ensured through Jesus Christ, he said also to those that were present with great assurance, *That now the Lord had given him a sight of that blessed place of eternal joy, and where he would be quickly, which was his greatest longing to have it hastened.* And with his last breathing almost had these words. *He was within the bonds of the Covenant with Jesus Christ.* He died *Anno* 1556. Professor of the Law at *Wittenberg*.

Sect. 10. *Jacobus Zuingerus*, a famous *German Professor of Medecine* at *Basil*, and ornament not only to the University, and his Profession as a Physician, but to the truth in a most convincing Christian walk, was pluck't away in the time of a great Pestilence, which was at *Basil*, whilst he made it his work to be useful at that time to others. The first touch of his disease was quickly discerned by him, and that his change would quickly follow upon it, so as his business was wholly anent his inward state. And as one panting after a better life, had once and againe these words to his friends. *I rejoice, yea my Spirit leapes within*

within me for joy, that now the time is at last come, when I shall see the glorious God face to face, whose glory with wondering I have only got some glance of here, in the search of natural things, whom I have worshipped, whom I have by faith longed after, & after whom my soul hath panted. And whilst his pain through the malignity of the disease was very grievous, he did express great patience, and composure of Spirit, having these words of *Job. Though he should kill me, I will trust in him*, and only did often groane forth his desire, that Jesus Christ would come & hasten his escape, so as all who look't on, might see him dying, and overcoming in such a sharp conflict at once. He died *Anne* 1610.

SECT. 11. OLympia Fulvia Morata an Italian born at Ferrara, and bred at the Court there with the young Princess, who was the Duk's Daughter, of a singular Spirit for learning, besides her other excellent endowments, so as she could both write and speak most elegant Latine and Greek in her very young years. But the by reason of her education, and the place of her abode wholly Popish, was at last bereft of her Father, who had a publick charge under the Duke there, with some visible withdrawing after, of that wonted respect she had in the Court? In the blessed providence of the Lord for her good though upon the account given of her life, she was such a person as enforced a conviction upon all that knew her not only of excellent natural endowments, but of her modest, prudent and vertuous deport in the place she lived which through the good hand of the Lord did occasion a learned *German* Physician then at *Ferrara*, a serious Protestan, to propose marriage with her, and thus was the occasion of her withdrawing from that Countrey, and to leave her Fathers house. Her husband, with whom she was then engaged, returning within a little to his own Countrey, where she gave her self most to study the Scripture, to which before she was wholly a stranger, and

d accounted it hazardous to converse with, the Lord
us breaking in upon her with the light and knowledge of
e truth, that in the short time of her life after, it was
t only the Protestant Religion she then embraced; but
greatest earnest followed the power and truth thereof:
as only her delight and comfort was in converse with di-
ne things. In a Letter she writes to that *young Princess*,
ith whom she was bred at *Ferrara*, which among some
her things she had write, was after her death published.
e hath these Words: *So soon as by the singular goodness of the*
ord to me I had got out from the Idolatry of my own Countrey,
d gone with my husband to Germany, *it may seeme incredible*
you, what a change the Lord then made upon my Spirit, that
e former aversion I had to read the Scripture, from which
had kept so great a distance, was then turned to have this my
greatest delight, and pleasure in the world, and now my soul is
ost taken up therewith: And there I may say is my only com-
rt and pleasure, about which my study, work and care I have
aced; so as the world, and the pleasures and delights therein,
hich once I was wount to admire, and too much taken with, are
come wholly contemptible with me. That short time of her a
ode with her husband in *Germany* before her death, was
most a continued conflict with renewed trials they met
ith in their private lot, being tossed from several places
y reason of the Warres, her husband taken by some Po-
sh Souldiers, and in much hazard of his life, which was
e of the sharpest conflicts she had in her time, upon any
ward account; there being very great love betwixt them;
as for a little she was almost crushed: but the Lord who
eard her groans, by a remarkeable providence returned
m safe. Thus did he graciously try and exercise this
oice person so early, after her being enlightned, with
e cross, yea, and thus further, to gain her soul to him-
lf, that her fervency in following the Lord was no less
markeable, than these tossings of her life were. But at
t a blessed periode comes to all, having setled with her
husband

husband at *Heidleberg*, where they had some lucide, an comfortable interval. She takes sickness, which in a fe dayes brought her to the grave, but with greatest adva tage in her inward case, as is set down at length by her hu band, under his own hand, whom he saith, with greate desire longed for her departure, & witnessed her comfort joy herein, that now the time was come, when she assu edly knew she should for ever be delivered from the grie and sorrowes of this sad world, which she had so remarke bly experienced, to enjoy that blessednes which is abo Nothing she could worse bear, than to heare of any pr sages of her recovery; and said to her friends: *The L had been pleased to give her a short course. but full of tossings trouble, and now could no more desire to returne again, when neer the port.* She was asked by some, if there was now a hesitation in her soul anent her state, and what peace s had thereanent to whom she answered thus. *For these se years before, which was since the time of my being engaged to Lord in embracing the truth, I had seldome any cessation fr some assault or other of the Devil to shake my faith, and weak my hands anent the truth: But now, as if he had lost all darts. he appears no more this way: Nor feele I in my soul thing, but unexpressible tranquillity and peace with God thro Jesus Christ.* Nor did she doubt the least to call her self of the Children of God. And a little before her clos having awaked out of sleep, she seemed to her husband look in an extraordinary manner, with a cheerful coun nance, which made him ask the cause, to whom she s *I have now got a sight in my rest of a most excellent and plea place, shining with an unexpressible light and brightnes.* her weakness was such, as she could get no more at pres spoken. Her husband being much affected, told her s had indeed cause of cheerfulness, since it was sure she sho now within a little space dwell in that pleasant and desir ble place, of which she had got such a sight. To wh with a most sweet and comfortable smile she could o

ſay, *Tota (inquit) ſum lætâ. I am full of joy: but now I know you no more.* Thus did that ſweet ſoul render up her Spirit, who had through moſt of her ſickneſs oft theſe words. That her ſole deſire was to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, and ſo far as her weakneſs could permit, did expreſs to others her ſenſe of the marvellous goodneſs of the Lord, in bringing her from her own Countrey, his enlightning her with the knowledge of his truth, and that he had taken her heart off the world, and from all the pleaſures and delights thereof, and wrought in her ſo ardent a deſire after eternal life, about which ſhe had then no feare. Theſe were but a few, as her husband relates, of what in that time ſhe expreſt, to the comfort, and wondering of all about her. She died at *Heidlebergh* in the year 1555. in the twenty ninth year of her age. This inſtance not only is at length ſet down by *Melchior Adamus* having the account thereof from her own husband, as he had write it after her death, but I find the ſame particularly mentioned by famous *Voetius*.

Sect. 11. HAving mentioned in the preceeding Section that rare example of piety, whom the Lord did thus marvellouſly reſcue from the darkneſs of Antichriſtian Popery under which ſhe lived; it may not be unſuteable, and I hope for edification to joyne ſuch an obſerveable Inſtance therewith, of the converſion of a *Lady*, in our own Countrey now ſeveral years agoe from Popery, who not only from her education, but with ſome ſerious, and conſcientious reſpect, before ſhe was enlightned, by the truth, did own the profeſſion of that way. The account ſet down is of her own words tranſcribed, which with much aſſurance I can here inſert; yea who after her converſion, untill the Lords calling her to himſelf did confirme the truth thereof, by covincing & examplar piety, to all that knew her. „ I have changed no good thing I had „ before: but what I then in appearance had, I labour

„ to have it in truth now. I did ever believe the Arti-
„ cles of the Creed, and now believe to be ſaved by the
„ blood of Jeſus Chriſt, and no other way, that true faith
„ muſt bring forth the fruits of repentance, & good works
„ elſe that faith is but dead and counterfeit. This change
„ upon me, neither I, nor any creature in the world
„ made, but the Lord himſelf within me: For I ſtrove
„ againſt it all I could, till he let me know that it was
„ himſelf dealing with me: And I now perceive had a
„ work in me from the beginning, though I then knew
„ it not. I had ſtill a love to the truth, and earneſt deſire to
„ know God, & ſtudied according to my knowledge to
„ do what might pleaſe him & durſt not follow: But made
„ ſome Conſcience to ſhun what I judged wrong. This
„ now I know was the beginning of the Lords work with
„ me: My love to his ſervice, and that deſire I had to be
„ ſaved, which made me piece and piece to ſearch out the
„ grounds of that Religion I profeſt: And when other
„ means failed, gave my ſelf to reading of books, choo-
„ ſing rather to be under that challenge of Curioſity,
„ (for ſo it was accounted) than to be careleſs of my
„ own Salvation: Yea it became my pleaſure above all
„ things in the Earth, to know what might further me to
„ heaven; ſo as I could have been ſatisfied. (If the Lord
„ had thought fit) to have renounced all the honour and
„ pleaſure of his world, for time and occaſion to uſe
„ thoſe means which might help me to heaven: but when
„ I got underſtanding of the grounds of that Religion I
„ profeſſed, and my Teachers accounted ſufficient, I
„ could find no true comfort there, nor how any could
„ have it thereby either in life or death, ſince all my life
„ I might not ſeek after aſſurance of being ſaved, for
„ that was called the Proteſtants preſumption, and a
„ my death nothing but purgatory, a fire as hot as hell,
„ and as great torments there, as they made me trow I
„ muſt goe to, but wiſt not how to get out again, yet

„ how

„how to escape hell it self, since I behoved to come so „near to it. I wondered, and yet wonder how any „that looks for purgatory at their death, can either have „true peace, or any comfort in the world; I am sure they „must either take it for a fiction, as it is. or else forget „themselves, when they are cheerful: Yet for all this I „continued in obedience of their injnnctions. but would „gladly have had a reason for what I did, & a warrant that „God would be pleased therewith: But could find „nothing, but mans word for all; and was told by such, as „gave themselves for Teachers that either I must be con„tent to believe, as the Kirk believed, or else I would get „no other satisfaction, I thought upon this from time „to time, and at last saw, that this was no sure ground „to leane upon, except I would content my self with „this, that the Clergy knew, albeit I knew not: that „they saw, albeit I was blind; that thy knew the gate „to heaven, though I was not sure whether I was going „to heaven, or purgatory: but this blind obedience „might well please them, it could never give me con„tent, except they could shew, that my obedience to „the Pope, and his Clergy should be as acceptable to „the Lord, as if it were to Christ and his Apostles, and „would not be quarrelled at the day of judgment. These „questions rising then in my mind, with the slight satis„faction I got, I must confess, put me to many thoughts „of heart; yet still I kept from Protestant books, or „conference with any such, especially the Ministers, as „long as I could: but when I saw no outgate, I was „forced to lay aside all my beads and books, and goe to „God himself for Christs sake, to teach me how to do his „will: but moe and moe doubts arose about sundry „points of my Religion, though I would never let the „truth have place, so long as I could hold it out. The „Lord forgive me, for I did it ignorantly. Yet not„withstanding he was pleased to bear in light, and his

„ truth upon me, as I was forced to acknowledge th
„ ſame, and leave theſe errors. I cannot tell all, no
„ the order of this, how they fell in my mind: bu
„ firſt I reſolved to believe neither Prieſt nor Mi
„ niſter, except ſo far as I underſtood their warra
„ from the Word of God: For I knew there was n
„ ſure ground to reſt on, and if any thing pleaſed th
„ Lord, it would be obedience to his own direction, an
„ might well quarrel mens Doctrine; but could neve
„ quarrel his own word. I reſolved then to read th
„ *Rhemiſts New Teſtament*, & the *Proteſtant Old Teſtamen*
„ for I wiſt well the Lord would never be angry to rea
„ his own word, ſince I knew it pertained to my ſoul, a
„ well as other folks, and I found it the ſweeteſt and ple
„ ſanteſt book that ever I read in my life. I loved their cauſ
„ the worſe who held me ſo long from reading it, and
„ bad token of them that loved not the Scriptures, fo
„ if they loved them, they could not have ſpoken o
„ them as they did, ſaying they are not perfect, they ar
„ not clear, nor plain but obſcure and ambiguous; ye
„ dangerous to be read, for breeding errors in ſuch tha
„ read the ſame, which cannot but ſcarre all that believe
„ them from the Lords Word. Sure this is an injury t
„ Chriſt and his Apoſtles, to ſpeak ſo of their writings,
„ as they could not be content that men ſhould ſpeak f
„ of theirs. Thus I perceived it to be falſe, their alledg
„ ing the Pope and Roman Kirk could not erre, an
„ how proud a word this was for any ſinful fleſh. Sur
„ the Apoſtle *Peter* was as good as any ſuch, and yet erred
„ and might have erred further, if God had not preſerve
„ him. And in reading the *Rhemiſts New Teſtament*,
„ found a warrant that young Children might read th
„ Scriptures with profit, and that it ſerves to inſtruc
„ and make men perfect in what concernes Salvation.
„ fell another day upon the *firſt Epiſtle of John*, where
„ found no neceſſity was of our confeſſing of ſins to th

„ Prie

„ Prieſt: But of Confeſſion thereof to God; who is „ faithful to cleanſe us from all ſin; and that no Advocat „ there is, but Chriſt. And again, if any ſay, they have „ no ſin, they lie, and the truth is not in them, which „ I thought a ſore word againſt them who ſay, they can- „ not fulfil the Law only, but do more than God Com- „ mands, by works of Supererogation. As for that ac- „ ception of mortal and venial ſinnes, it could not ſatisfy, „ when Chriſt ſhewes, that they who ſay, thou fool, „ are guilty of hell fire. Although ſome ſins be greater „ than others, yet the leaſt brings us under the curſe, if „ God deale in the way of Juſtice with us, I tint conceit „ of their Legends and life of their Saints, when I con- „ ſidered ſome abominable lies I found in them: As that „ of *St Catharine of Sienna*, whom they alledge laid her „ mouth to Chriſts ſide, and drunk her Sacrament, and „ that he interchanged hearts with her, and came down „ from Heaven, and brought his Mother with *St Peter* and „ *St Paul* with him, and wedded her with a ring. I was „ made to diſreliſh their forme of Prayers, and repeating „ over, and over again the ſame words, until their beads „ be ended. I perceived all their devotion they taught, „ ſtood in Words and Ceremonies which God eares not „ for. However I diſliked many things, and was aſſured „ they were wrong, yet I never renounced them, till I „ found my ſelf miſtaken in the matter of the Sacrament. „ & found in reading the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, there is no „ neceſſity to offer daily *Hoſties* for the Sins of the Peo- „ le. „ For this Chriſt did once in offering up himſelf, „ ho continues for ever, & hath an ever laſting Prieſthood. „ hereby he is able to ſave for ever them that goe unto „ od by him. And again, that Chriſt was gone into Heaven, „ appear before God, not that he muſt offer up himſelf „ y more, for then muſt the have often ſuffered from the „ eginning of the World, but now once he appeared to put „ way ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf. „ Thus I perceive, if

„ the Scripture be true, no man can offer Christ but him-
„ self, nor can there be a Priest after him now, *since he ever*
„ *lives himself to make intercession for us*, nor can Christ
„ be offered oftner nor once, neither is any need of this,
„ *since by one offering he hath taken away the sinnes of*
„ *his people*; yea this is as impossible, as that he should
„ suffer oftner than once. Then I thought, If Christ
„ be not offered in his bodily substance in the Mass, there
„ can be no Trnsubstantiation in it. My Teachers herein
„ called me Curious, but gave me no good answer. I
„ wondered also at that place 1. *Cor.* 10. where it is said,
„ that *in the wilderness they did eat the same Spiritual meat*
„ *and drunk the same Spiritual drink, for they drunk of that*
„ *Spiritual Rock, which followed them, & that Rock was Christ*.
„ Since they made me believe, that Christ could not be
„ in a Spiritual way by faith eaten or drunk, as the Prote-
„ stants teach, but his very flesh and blood taken in at the
„ mouth substantially. I thought, how can the Rock
„ be called Christ, since literally it could not be in the
„ sense of the Romish Church, since he was not yet in-
„ carnate: if it be a figure, then the Protestants must have
„ the better in the matter of the Sacrament, since as the
„ Rock is called Christ, so is the bread called his body.
„ These doubts about the Sacrament so affected me, as I
„ could not but choose, and send for a Minister, (Let
„ any judge, if it was not then time) with whom I rea-
„ soned thereanent. He answered my doubts, and di-
„ rected me to prayer herein, shewing I could not ge-
„ solide rest, till the Lord made his word lively on m-
„ soul, which I found after made good, the Lord makin-
„ the Scripture efficacious, lively and clear in the point-
„ I doubted of, and gave both such assurance of his love
„ and of the true Religion, that all the earth could no-
„ have bred me such joy and solide peace, beyond an-
„ thing I can utter. I have now got the assurance in som-
„ measure, which I was seeking. I haye found the tru-
„ groun-

, ground to rest upon, and Gods own truth made lively.
, I am now free from the feare of Purgatory; I scorn
, that fiction now with joy, and am assured the Lord is
, righteous, who will not exact twice payment of one
, debt, Christs passion, and his peoples torment in a fire as
, hot as hell. The Lord, who hath promised a sufficient
, Cautioner for us, that we might escape torment, cannot
, come short herein. The Lord help such, who live in fear
, of this wicked fiction. If the Pope, and his Clergy, for
, the love they have to money, keep the world in such
, fearful blindness, they have their judge to answer unto.
, I praise the Lord who has delivered me out of these er-
, rors, I renounce them, & have found too great mercy in
, the knowledge of the truth to make me exchange again.
, O that all knew the difference as well as I have felt.

Besides these choice and weighty *Instances* before mentioned, I must here further add a few memorable passages of the death of some grave and eminent Ministers of Christ in our Countrey, worthy to be recorded, as a seal not only of their Ministery, and acceptance therein with their Master, but to the truth of godliness, and Doctrine of the Protestant Church; which have hitherto been little known, nor was mentioned amongst the Instances of some great and extraordinary Ministers of Christ in the Church of *Scotland* former published; the truth whereof I had from one of the gravest Ministers of our Church both for judgment and piety in that time, yea under his own hand, who was himself present at the death of all here mentioned, excepting this first *Instance*, which was many years before.

Sect. 12. IT may be an astonishing passage anent the death of that worthy man of God *Mr David Black*, set down by his old intimate friend *Mr Andrew Melvin*, with whom for a time he was Colleague in *St Andrews*, untill for the truth, and his adherence there-

to, he was after forced by a confinement to a more retired place beyond *Tay in Angus*, where his Miniſtery was untill his death, which paſſage he aſſuredly knowing, the truth thereof he relates thus. *That after neer communion with God, and extraordinary aſſiſtance in publick a few dayes before his death, where he ſeemed not only to ſurpaſs all others, but himſelf alſo at that time, with ſuch a diſcernable gale of the Spirit, both to humble the hearts of his hearers, and after to ſuch a melting of their Spirits, as they burſt forth in rivers of tears, and thus to an engaging them to take on the ſweet and eaſy yoke of Chriſt. He found then alſo upon his own ſoul ſuch a ſenſible taſte of heaven, and being admitted to feele, as it were, the air of that Countrey with ſome unuſual enjoyment of the hid pleaſures, and delights, which are there. He was ſeized with a fervent longing to put off his earthly tabernacle, that he might get a dimiſſion from the Lord from his priſon here to that unconceiveably bleſſed ſtate and fellowſhip of the ſociety above, to which by a marvellous condeſcendence, the Lord did ſo far indulge his ſervant after many ſore conflicts, and wreſtlings he had in his life, to give ſuch a ſecret hint and intimation of this to himſelf, as he could not conceale it, not only from his family, but from his flock, taking a moſt ſolemne farewell of them all, with a diſcourſe,* as Mr Melvin ſhewes, *that ſeem'd to be ſpoke out of heaven, concerning the miſeries and griefs here, with that unconceiveable glory, which is above, and his aſſurance to be there. The night following, after a ſhort ſupper, and having read and prayed in his family with ſome unuſual continuance, ſtrong and heavy groans, and deep wreſtlings, he went a little to bed. And the next day having then called his people to the Celebration of the Sacrament, went to Church, where after Sermon, and the Celebration of the Communion, had ſcarce ended, when he finds the approaches of death ſeize upon him, with ſuch a pre'ent change, as his friends eſſayed to hold him up on every hand; but he preſſing to be at his knees with his hands and eyes liſt up to heaven in the very act of adoration as in a tranſport, is taken away without pain or trouble.*

Thus

Thus as the Relator foresaid shewes, that that holy & excellent man did breath forth his precious soul in so extraordinary away, that as he sayes it seemed rather like a *translation*, than a death, and without any known sickness. This account by that famous servant of Christ *Mr Andrew Melvin*, was many years since published, with this title, *Mira & vera relatio de Davidis Blackij transmigratione in Cæleſtem Patriam.*

Sect. 13. *Mr Robert Scot*, a truely godly and able Minister of Christ at *Glasgow*, died *January* 18. 1629. On his death-bed he did witness his souls abhorrence at the wicked & corrupt courses of the time, „ and „ my comfort is, saith he, that God with held me from „ them. If I were to live, I should not be so sparing as I „ have been to witness against these. And a litle before his death, he lay sometime as in a kind of *traunce*, and after his awaking out of it, took off his night cape, and threw it to the bed feet, and cryed out, *I have now seen the Lord, and heard him say, make way for my faithful servant Mr Robert Scot*, bidding his friends farewell; and then after died.

Sect. 14. *Mr Robert Cunningham Minister at Holywood* in the *north* of *Ireland*, about whom this account I had from the same worthy Relator and others his intimate acquaintance there, that he was the one man to his discerning of all that ever he knew, who resembled most the meekness of Jesus Christ in his whole carriage, and was so convincing in his way to the most gross, and reverenced by all, that he was oft troubled with that Scripture, woe to you, when all men speak well of you, so as it was told some of his Adversaries in that place, that it was sure, if ever they medled with *Mr Cunningham*, their cup would be full. He was sometimes in publick preaching, to his own sense, not so assisted as usually: but even then to the discerning Christians of these times, was as edifying and refreshful as at any time else, But

ordinarily was borne through with a full gale. I was with him (saith he) at his death in *Irwin* in the year 1637. At which time, besides many other weighty expressions, he said one time. *I see Christ standing over deaths head, and saying, Deale warrily with my servant, loose now this one pin, and here another, for this Tabernacle must be set up again. A little before his death, his wife sitting on the bed side, where he lay, and her hand in his, he did by prayer recommend to God the whole Church, the word of the Gospel in Ireland, his own Parish, and his Children, and in end said, And lastly, O Lord, I recommend to thee this* Gentlewoman, *who is no more my wife, and with that saying, he softly loosed his hand from her's, and gently thrust it a little from him, at which both she and some others present burst out in weeping, and within a little after he rendred up his Spirit.*

SECT. 15. *Mr Josias Welch Minister at Temple Patrick in Ireland*, as the former worthy Relator shewes, died *June* 23. 1634. with whom he was then present. He had many gracious & edifying expressions, though also some wrestlings, as in much of his life he had been thus kept under deep inward exercises, A little before his close he said with a sad groan, *Oh for Hypocrisy*, upon which one speaks to the company of Christians then present. See how Satan fastens on the heele of this servant of Christ, even when he is going in over the threshold of heaven. A little after, whilst he was at prayer at his bed side, and that word *Victory*, coming out of his mouth, he presently took hold of his hand, and desired him to cease a little, and clapping both his hands together cried out. *Victory, Victory, Victory, for evermore*, and then desired him to goe on in prayer, and in a short time after died.

This was the more observeable, in so sweet and triumphant a close, that, through most of the time of his Ministery, he had such frequent and sharp conflicts in his own

own private case, so as once after he had been through the exercise of his Spirit brought so Low, as put his friends to some astonishment there anent, he was enforced to desire a meeting of these great and eminent Ministers of Christ who then lived in that Countrey neer him, shewing his pressure was such, as he could not longer conceale what was on his Spirit thereanent: And after meeting together with prayer, whilst his countenance spake the weight of his inward exercise, and with tears runing over his face, he told them the cause of that meeting, that he had been now for a long time prest to desert the Ministery; having preached for so many years the Gospel of Christ to others, and yet himself but a cast away. Thus did the Lord graciously deale with his servant, so as the truth of his own grace was hid from himself, whilst it shin'd in the greatest lustre to the conviction of others: but this advantage also followed thereon, that his Ministery then was made most remarkeably fruitful, not in the place he lived in only, but in the whole Countrey, and thus fitted by his own exercise and wrestlings, to deale with the Consciences of others.

Sect. 16. Mr *John Shrymgeor Minister at Kinghorn*, a man not so polish't, but rudelike in his deport and manner, but of a deep reach of natural wit, very learned and knowing in the Hebrew language, and of eminent piety. He told this passage to some of his intimate friends, that having diverse Children taken away by death, and one young daughter at that time, whom he loved most dearly, under that disease of the Cruels, which is called the Kings evil, with several runing sores thus upon her, so as she was at the point of death. He was one night called up to see her die, and finding her in that case, went out to the fields, as he told, in the night season, being in great grief and anxiety, so as he adventured when alone on such expostulating with the Lord,

and

and with such expressions, so as for all the world he durst not again utter. And being thus prest, said, *thou knoweſt O Lord, I hitherto have ſerved thee in the uprightneſs of my heart according to my power, nor have ſtood in aw to declare thy mind before the greateſt whoſoever in the time, and thou ſeeſt I take pleaſure in this child, and cannot obtain ſuch a thing at thy hand as her ſparing: for I was (ſaith he) then in great agony of Spirit: but a laſt it was ſaid to him from the Lord, I have heard thee at this time, but uſe not this boldneſs with me in time coming for ſuch particulars.* And when he came home, the child was sitting up in her bed taking meat, and fully whole, and when he look't to these sores, that had been runing upon her, they were quite healed. A little before his death, that foresaid worthy Minister of Christ the Relator, went to see him, where he was under such sore pain of the stone, as he was sometimes enforced to cry out. He said to him, my nature hath been rude and slunkard all my dayes, and now by this pain, the Lord is even dauntoning me, to make me as a Lamb, before he take me to himself.

Sect. 17. THis Instance I judged worthy to be insert, having such assurance of the truth thereof, namely of *Mr John Mc Birney*, Minister in *Aberdene*, a godly, zealous & painful Preacher, he used alwayes when He rode to have two Bibles with him, the one in the Original, the other in English, and being alone was then exercised; either in reading, meditating or praying, and if any were in Company with him, he would read or speak from the Scripture to them. When he dyed, he called his wife, and told her, he had no outward means to leave either to her, or to his only Daughter, who had survived him, but had got assurance from the Lord, that he should provide for them both. And accordingly the day he was buried, the Magistrats of the Town came to the House after the burial, and brought two subscribed

scribed Papers, one of a competent maintenance to his wife during her life, another of a provision for his Daughter.

CHAP. VI.

SECT. 1. THat the Lords way and appearances for the Church of *Scotland*, since the late blessed *Reformation from Popery*, both in the rise, and advance thereof, had been truely *Extraordinary and Marvellous*, may be demonstrable on these grounds. 1. That this great Reformation, was at such a remarkeable period, as at no time it could in an ordinary way have seemed more hopeless, these being considered. 1. How little of any humane or visible encouragements concurred thereto, to darken that brightness of the Lords own appearance in this marvellous advance and spreading of his Kingdom through that land. 2. That by the Queen's Marriage with the *French King*, the Adversaries of the truth, had the strength of this Kingdome, besides those that were amongst themselves to concurre in opposition to the Work of God there. 3. We see the Queene Dowager then at the Helme of Government, and her greatest aime with the furthest both of subtilty and force, to crush and bear down any stirrings of the Work of the Lord at that time. 4. That bloody and cruel man *Cardinal Beton*, who with greatest vigour and authority did act beyond any of his Predecessors, to bear down any rising of the Gospel at that time.

SECT. 2. IT was undeniable, how the first instruments whom the Lord called forth about his work in that Land, were then extraordinarily called, and had a most convincing seale thereof. I shall only set down the first

first *three*; who with such an extraordinary appearance of the Lord, were sent forth upon his Work in that Land. 1. *Mr Patrick Hamilton* a young Gentleman, of great birth, of excellent parts and learning, fervent in the truth, who was quickly taken away, whom the Zeale of God did so eat up, that after his travelling abroad, and familiar converse with such men as *Luther and Melanthon*, those bright beams of Light then planted in his heart, did enforce a publick vent of the same. But the Popish Clergy, under the dread of their own hazard did with all possible vigour bestirre themselves to have him taken away, and to labour with the King then young, to goe in Pilgrimage to *St Dothies* in *Ross*, that thus no intercession in his absence might be made for him. But it may be no less seen, how this heat for having him taken out of the way, did most observeably help to bring down the house over them, and a greater ruine to their interest, by his death, than his life. At the place of his execution he exhorted to bear in mind the *Example* of his death, which though bitter to the flesh, (yet said) it is the entrance into eternal life, which none shall possess, who denies Jesus Christ before this wicked generation. And whilst one *Campbel a Friar*, did most trouble him in the very time of his sufferings, he said, *Wicked man, thou knowest the Contrary and hast confessed the same to me, I appeale thee before the Tribunal seat of Christ*: After which, within a few dayes, the said *Friar*, died in much terror of Conscience, and as one desperate. This was *Anno Ch.* 1527.

Sect. 3. As a further witness to this, I must instance that great Servant of Christ, *Mr George Wisheart*, who a little after was sent forth to publish the Gospel there, whose life being at large insert in that History of the Reformation of the Church of *Scotland*, was the reason I for-bore to mention him amongst these

great

reat Instruments of our Church, I have else where re-
corded. But since many can have little access for perusal
of this, yea that without the least hesitation, from all the
Records of the Church since the first times of the Apostles
more extraordinary Ambassador of Jesus Christ, cannot
e instanced. I shall give this short account of him, from
Mr Knox himself, who then was much with him; yea not
nly from the printed history of the Church, that was by
im penned, but by a Manuscript from his own mouth
earing the same account, which I have beside me. This
reat man, after this being for a considerable time abroad,
eing one of admirable grace, and singularly learn-
ed, both in divine and humane sciences, did at last re-
urne to his own Countrey, where he first preached in
Montross and then in *Dundee*, to the admiration of all that
eard him, untill that one *Robert Mill* in that Town, at
he instigation of the Cardinal (though he being a prin-
ipal man there, had sometime been a Professor of Reli-
ion) did in the time of publick sermon, inhibit his
roubling their town any more by preaching, since he
ould not suffer it. Whereupon this blessed man, musing
little with his eyes bent unto Heaven, *said*, *God is my*
witness, that I never minded your trouble, but your comfort;
yet it is more sad to me than yourselves: But I am sure, that to
refuse and chasse from you his Messengers, shall not preserve you
from trouble, but bring you into it, and God shall send you Mi-
nisters, that shall neither fear burning nor Banishment, I have
offered you the Word of Salvation with the hazard of my life,
but now ye refuse me, and I must leave my Innocency to be de-
clared by my God. If it be long prosperous with you, I am not
led by the Spirit of Truth, but if unlookt for trouble come, ac-
knowledge the cause, and turne to God, who is gracious and mer-
ciful. Some Noblemen then present perswaded him to
tay, which by no means he would, but went to the
West Countrey, with an offer of the Gospel, where he
was gladly received by many, though the Bishop of *Glas-*

gow,

gow, with his trains came to the Town of *Air* to reſi
him, and ſecured the publick Church for himſelf t
preach in, which whilſt ſome oppoſed, *Mr Wiſhea*
ſaid, let him alone, let us goe to the market Croſs, an
ſo they did, where he made ſo notable a Sermon, as hi
very enemies themſelves were confounded. After h
came to *Machlin*, where he was by force kept out of th
Church. To ſome, who would have broke in, he ſai
Jeſus Chriſt is as mighty in the fields, as in the Church, yea h
often preached in the deſert, at the ſea ſide, and in other place
It is the Word of peace God ſends by me, the blood of none ſha
this day be ſhed for it, and ſo going to the fields, he ſtoo
on a bank, where he continued preaching 3. hours, an
God wrought ſo wonderfully thereby, as one of th
wickedeſt men in all the Countrey, the *Laird of Shel*
was converted, & his eyes ran down with ſuch abundanc
of tears, as all men wondered. It was then the new
was brought to *Mr Wiſheart*, that the plague was brok
up in *Dundee*, within four dayes after he was prohibite
to preach there, yea with ſuch a rage, as its almoſt be
yond credite how many died. This being related to him
notwithſtanding the importunity of his friends, he woul
goe thither, ſaying, they are now in trouble, and need
comfort, perhaps this hand of God will make them re
verence his word, which before they lightly eſteeme
Coming to *Dundee*, the joy of the faithful was exceedin
great, and becauſe moſt of the Inhabitants were eithe
ſick or imployed about them, he chooſed the Eaſt ga
to preach upon, where the whole were within, and th
ſick without the gate, his Text *Pſ.* 107. *He ſent his wor*
and healed them, &c. Where he ſo comfortably hel
forth the gain and comfort of Gods Word; what puniſh
ment comes by contempt of it, and freedome of his gra
to ſuch as truely turne to him, with the happineſs of h
people whom he takes from this miſery.. as the hearts o
his Hearers were ſo raiſed not to regard death, but t
judg

judge them the more happy who should then depart, not knowing whether they might have such a comforter again with them. After this the plague almost quite ceased, and when he took his leave of them said, that God had almost put an end to that plague, and he was now called to another place, and thence he went to *Monetoss* to salute the Church, where he sometimes preached, but spent most of his time in private meditation, in which he was so earnest, as night and day he continued in it. It was at that time the *Cardinal* conspired his death, by a Counterfeit letter of a friend of *Mr Wisheart*, the *Laird of Kinneere*, that with all possible speed he would come to him, since he was taken with a sudden sickness. In the mean time, did 60. armed men ly in wait within a mile and an half of the Town of *Montross* to murder him in the way. The letter coming to his hands by a boy, who also brought him an horse to ride on, he set forwards with some honest men there, who were his friends: but suddenly stopping and musing a space in the way, he returned, which they wondering at, asked the cause: to whom he said, *I will not goe, I am forbidden of God, and assuredly there is treachery: Let some of you goe to yonder place, and tell me what ye find*, which they doing, found to be truth, and on their returne told *Mr Wisheart* of it, whereon he said, I know, I shall end my life by that blood thirsty man, but it will not be on this manner. The time approaching for his meeting the Gentlemen at *Edinburgh*, he took his leave and departed, and by the way, as he lodged with a faithful Brother, *James Watson of Innergowry*, he got up in the night, and went into a yard, upon which two friends hearing, did secretly follow: there he walking in an alley for some space, breathing forth many sobbs and deep groans, then fell on his knees, and his groans increased, and then upon his face. Those that watched him found him thus weeping & praying an houre, after which upon his incoming, they adventured to ask him where he had been, saying, be plain with us, for we have heard your

mourning, and ſaw your geſtures; to whom with a ſad countenance he ſaid, I had rather ye had been in your beds: but I will tell you, I am aſſured my warefare is neer an end, and therefore pray with me, that *I* ſhrink not now when the battel is moſt hot: upon which with weeping they ſaid, this is ſmall comfort to us, to whom he anſwered, *God ſhall ſend you comfort after. This Realme ſhall be enlightened with the light of Chriſts Goſpel as clearly, as any day ſince the dayes of the Apoſtles; yea the houſe of God ſhall be built there, and ſhall not want in deſpite of enemies the very copſtone put upon it, nor will it be long before this ſhall be, and many ſhall not ſuffer after me, till the Glory of God ſhall appear and triumph in deſpite of Satan: but alas! if the people afterwards prove unthankful, then fearful ſhall the plagues be that will follow.* Then went he upon his journey to *Leith*: but hearing nothing of thoſe Gentlemen that were to meet him, he kept himſelf retired, and grew penſive, and being ask't the reaſon, ſaid, *what differ I from a dead man: hitherto God hath uſed my labours for inſtruction, & to the diſcloſing of darkneſs, and now I lurk as one that dare not ſhew his face*, hereupon his friends finding his deſire to preach, ſaid, it is moſt comfortable for us to hear you, but for the danger you are in, we dare not deſire it. To whom he ſaid, let God provide for me, as pleaſeth him, if you dare hear; and ſo preached on the parable of the Sower, *Matth.* 13. And a little after preached at *Enneresk* neer *Muſleburgh*, where was a great confluence of people, and whilſt two *Gray Friars* then at the Church doore, whiſpered to ſuch as came in, *Mr Wisheart* obſerving, ſaid to the people, I pray you make roome for theſe men, it may be they come to learne: and to them he ſaid, come neer, *for I aſſure you, ye ſhall hear the word of truth, which this day ſhall ſeale up either your ſalvation or damnation.* But whilſt they ſtill continued to diſturbe the people, he turned to them the ſecond time with an angry countenance, and ſaid, *O Miniſters of Satan, will ye neither hear the truth, nor ſuffer others to hear it: depart, and take this for your portion, God ſhall ſhortly confound and diſ-*

cloſe

cloſe your hypocriſy within this Kingdome, you ſhall be abominable to men, and your places and habitations deſolate. This he ſpake with much vehemency, and turning to the people ſaid, *theſe men have provoked the Spirit of God into anger*, and then proceeded in his Sermon. After he preached in diverſe places elſe, the people much flocking after him, and in all his Sermons foretold the ſhortneſs of time he had to travel, and near approach of his death. Coming to *Haddington*, his Auditory began much to decreaſe by the Earle of *Bothwell*, whoſe power was great there, and upon the inſtigation of the *Cardinal* had prohibited ſuch both of the Countrey, and Town from hearing. As he was going to Church, he received a letter from the Weſt-countrey Gentlemen, and having read it, ſaid to *John Knox*, who then diligently waited upon him, that he was weary of the world, becauſe he ſaw men to be weary of God, for the Gentlemen of the Weſt have ſent me word, that they cannot keep the meeting at *Edinburgh*. *Mr Knox* wondering he ſhould ſpeak this ſo immediatly before Sermon, contrary to his way, ſaid. Sir, Sermon now approaches, I will now leave you to your meditation. Then *Mr Wisheart* walked up and down about half an hour, his ſad countenance ſhewing the grief of his mind, and after went to the pulpit, where his Auditory being ſmall, he begain in this manner: *O Lord, how long ſhall it be, that thy holy word ſhall be deſpiſed, and men not regard their own Salvatien. I have heard of thee O* Haddington, *that two or three thouſand perſons would be at a vain and wicked play, and now to hear the Meſſenger of the Eternal God, can ſcarce one hundred be numbred. Sore and fearful ſhall the plagues be, which will enſue on ſuch a contempt, with fire and ſword ſhalt thou be plagued, yea thee* Haddington *in ſpecial, ſtrangers ſhall poſſeſs, and the preſent Inhabitants ſhall either in bondage ſerve their enemies, or ſhall be chaſed from their own habitations, and that becauſe ye have not known, nor will know the time of your viſitation.* This Prophecy was accomplished not long after, as *Mr Knox* ſhewes, and was then known to all; whilſt the *Engliſh* made it a garriſon, and after having burnt and

ſpoiled a great part of it, the *French* that came as auxiliaries did help forward that ſtroake, ſo as this Town did never recover her former beauty, nor men of ſuch wiſdome and parts, as did formerly inhabite it. That night was *Mr Wisheart* apprehended in the houſe of *Ormeſtone* by the *Earle of Bothwell*, ſuborned thereto by the *Cardinal*; The manner was thus. After Sermon he took his laſt farewel of his friends in *Haddington*, *John Knox* would have faine gone with him, but he ſaid, *Returne to your Children, and God bleſs you, ſufficient is one for one ſacrifice.* And then went to the houſe of *Ormeſtone* with the *Laird*, and others who accompanied him, and after Supper had a comfortable diſcourſe of the love of God towards his Children, upon which after ſinging *Pſ.* 51. he retired to his Chamber, praying that the Lord, if it were his good will, would give comfortable reſt to them that night: but at midnight the houſe was beſet; and the *Earle* of *Bothwell* ſhewed the *Laird* of the houſe, it was in vain to reſiſt, ſince the *Governour* and *Cardinal* were within a mile thence at *Elphinſton*, with a great power, but gave furtheſt aſſurances, that if they would open the gates, *Mr Wisheart* ſhould be ſafe; to whom the *Laird of Ormeſtone*, with ſome Barons then preſent; ſaid unto *Bothwell* (ſuch was their love and fervency for the truth,) *My Lord, if you keep promiſe, we will give you a band of manrent, and not only our ſelves will ſerve you, but will procure all the Profeſſors in Louthian to do the ſame.* But this was quickly broke upon *Bothwells* account. And after was that holy and excellent man taken to *St Andrew's* where the Cardinal with others of the Clergy did with greateſt vigour purſue him to death, at which time turning to the people, when he was brought to the fire; he ſaid, *I beſeech you, be not offended at the Word of God, for the torments which ye ſee prepared for me, but I exhort you to love the word and ſuffer patiently, and with a comfortable heart for the words ſake, which is your undoubted Salvation; and everlaſting comfort. I pray you alſo ſhew, my brethren, that they ceaſe not to learne the Word of God which I taught, according to the meaſure of the grace given; for no perſe-*

cution

cution nor trouble in this world, and that this Doctrine was no old Wifes Fables, but the truth of God, for if I had taught mens Doctrine, I should have had greater thanks from men; but for the words sake I now suffer, not sorrowfully, but with a glade heart; for this I was sent into the world, that for Christs sake I should suffer this fire. Behold my face, you shall not see me change my Countenance. I fear not the fire, and if persecution arise for the words sake, fear not them that can kill the body, and have not power to hurt the soul. And when the fire was kindled, said, this torments my body, but no whit abates my Spirit. Then looking towards the Cardinal he said. *He who in such state from that high place feeds his eyes with my torments, within a few dayes shall be hanged out of the same window, to be seen with as much ignominy, as he now leans there with pride.* Which prediction was a few dayes after most remarkeably fulfilled.

Sect. 4. SEeing there is a publick account of *Mr Knox*, that deservedly famous instrument for the work of Reformation in the Church of *Scotland*, I forbeare to give any repetition here: But this further, which is not insert in the account given of his life, and which with some assurance I can set down here. I thought worthy to relate. How before his death, when he was enforced to goe over to *St Andrewes* from *Edinburgh*, because of the *Queen's* faction, which was so strong in the *Town*, and the *Castle* kept out upon her interest, yea was so weak, as to be help't to the Church, leaning upon his servant *Richard Balantine*; he told the people, that the *Castle* should vomite out the Captain thereof, who was the *Laird of Grange*; and that he should not come forth of the gate, but over the walls, and that *Tower* of the *Castle*, which was called *Davids Tower*, should run like a sand glass; upon which one *Mr Robert Hamilton* Minister there, used some freedome to ask what warrant he had for this; he answered, *thou shalt see this with thine eyes; and know it to be truth*; as it came to pass, he being then in *Edinburgh*, when the fore work of the *Castle*

was demolished by the *English* Cannon, and run down like a ſandy bray, he ſaw the Captain come over the walles with a ſtaffe in his hand, becauſe the gate was then ſtopt with the rubbish, and how in this very circumſtance the words of that man of God was accomplished. It was a little before this he ſent by *Mr David Lindſay* a grave *Miniſter*, to the *Laird of Grange*, that meſſage which is publiſhed in his life, to whom he ſaid, you know I have loved this Gentleman well, but ſhew him from me, that if he do not give over his hoſtile oppoſition, he ſhall be brought over the walls with ſhame, and be hung up with his face to the ſun, as after exactly fell out, and ſaid further, of this, God hath aſſured me. Upon which delivery of that meſſage by *Mr Lindſay*, and a returne of his Anſwer both from the Captain and *Secretary Lethington*, who was then there, he ſaid, *I am ſorry, that this ſhould befall him, yet God aſſureth me, there is mercy for his ſoul, for the other I have no warrant that it ſhall be well with him, which words after,* Grange *deſired* Mr David Lindſay *to tell him over again before his death, (being truely penitent) and was much comforted therewith, and ſaid, I hope to give ſome evidence of the Lords making good the words of that man of God, at my death, as fell out moſt diſcerneably both by his words and carriage at that time. A little before* Mr Knox *his own death, he ſaid, I have been fighting with ſpiritual wickedneſſe, and have prevailed, I have been in heaven and taſted of the heavenly joyes, and if it were the good will of the Lord, he hath ſo far ſubjected my Spirit to his will as to be content, though for many years, to ly under this pain and trouble, which now is upon me.*

Sect. 5. SOme ſignal and aſtonishing providences for making way to the work of Reformation, there might be ſeen then, as a convincing witneſs thereto 1. That ſurpriſing death of *Henry the 2. of France*; and within a little of *Francis* his Son, to whom the Crown then by marriage with the *Young Queene* was ſo far made over, as

was

was like to bring both the Civil and Religious interest of the Nation under the *French* yoke, and to have most enforcing snares therewith, for engaging such as were of greatest power then, to a compliance with their way, on whom they saw their hope of preferment with other outward advantages did so visibly depend. 2. That stupendious and stately Act of the judgment of the Lord, in the death of *Cardinal Beton*, who was so great an Adversary to the truth, and in whose hand the whole Power Civil and Ecclesiastick seemed to be ingrossed; where all may see an extraordinary providence, and the immediate finger of God, except they will shut their eyes. 1. In the strange excitement of Instruments to adventure thereon, against all humane reason, or any appearance, how they could withstand the power of the Popish party, both at home and abroad. 2. How some of those were enforced to declare their having no interest, or motive else, but to avenge the blood of that excellent man *Mr Wisheart*; and of his being a sworne Adversary to Jesus Christ and his Truth, for which they were sent of the Lord. 3. So strange a concurrance of things to make this effectual, that in one morning, not above eighteene seised on that strong *Castle* in *St Andrews*, where he lived, and put near an hundred Servants and Workmen out of the gates, without tumult or blood. 4. How this was in a very few dayes after the sufferings of that man of God - yea so manifest an accomplishment of his prediction before the World, that out of the place where the Cardinal was looking forth, with greatest joy to feed his eyes upon the sufferings of that blessed witness for Christ, he should be hung over as a spectacle of the holy judgment of God, whilst nothing then, in an ordinary way could have seemed more improbable. 5. The remarkeable preservation and returne of all those, after they were sent Prisoners to *France*, as *Mr Knox*, who was then there did with greatest assurance from the Lord promise.

Sect. 6. IT is astonishing, and should be matter of wonder and praise for after ages to consider that solemne time of the *Reformation*, when the Lord began to visite his Church there, what a swift course the spreading of the Kingdome of Christ had; and how Professors of the truth thronged in, amidst the greatest threatnings of those on whose side authority and power then was: O how astonishing, and extraordinary was this appearance of the Lord there, on all ranks to offer themselves willingly for the truth, and upon such of his Servants, as were sent forth in the work of the Ministery; with such zeale and onnes of Spirit, as on the furthest hazard of their lives & estate, they did enter into *Covenant* for mutual defence for the Truth of Christ, and a free Profession thereof, as is set down at large in the History of the *Reformation*; first in the Year 1557. and after at *Perth* in the Year 1559. by *the Congregation of the West Countrey, Perth, Dundee, Fife, Anguse, and Mearns; to concurre, assist and conveene together, and not spare labour, goods, substance, bodies and lives*. (for these are the words thereof,) *to maintaine the Liberty of the Congregation, and every member thereof, against whomsoever that should trouble them for the cause of Religion*, Thus with no lesse evidence was this promise then accomplished in that age, as ever *Isa.* 40: 31. *That they who wait on the Lord should mount up as with Eagles wings, and should run and not be weary, &c.* As Mr *Knox* then shewed; *for what was our force saith he, or number, to bring so great an enterprise to such a close, our very enemies can witnesse, yet in how great purity did God establish his true Religion amongst us, and this we confesse to be a strength given us from God, because we esteemed not our selves wise in our own eyes, but knowing our wisdome to be foolishnesse before God, laid it aside, and followed that which was only approved of him. In this point could never our enemies cause us faint whilst for this we wrestled, that the Reverend face of the first primitive and Apostolick Church, should be reduced to the eyes and knowledge of men, and in that point hath our God strengthned us to*

ole work was finished, as the world may ſee. To this purpoſe doth *Mr Knox* ſpeak *Hiſt. of Reform. Pag.* 303. 304.

SECT. 7. TO witneſs the immediate finger of the Lord here, and that his peoples ſtrength then was in *his preſence going before them*. it was remarkeable, *that ſudden ſurpriſing darkneſs, and almoſt univerſal faintneſs*, upon the Spirits of all men engaged for the truth, a very little before this great deliverance, and ſetled calme in the Churches eſtablishment. For at that time, whilſt the *French* kept *Leith*, and the Proteſtant party ſeemed moſt unite with a greater concurrance of the Nobility and Gentry, than had been formerly; ſuch *an amazing fear and terror*, did then ſeize on moſt, as they withdrew without any diſcerneable cauſe, that all might ſee the Lords bleſſed concurrance, and ſuch an high ſpring tide of his peoples zeale and reſolution, for the truth, to have no neceſſary connexion with humane aſſiſtance, and furtheſt encouragements from that airth. At which time *Mr Knox* Preaching at *Stirlin*, whither moſt in that confuſion and panik feare, were retired, had theſe words, as are at length ſet down in the *Church Hiſtory*. *This day are our faces confounded. Our Enemies triumph: Our hearts have quaked for fear, when we were very few in number in compariſon of our enemies, and had neither Duke or Lord, (for at this time* Duke Hamilton *was joined with the Lords of the Congregation,) except a very few. We called on God, and took him for our Protector; and amongſt us was heard no boaſting of multitude, ſtrength or Policy: But only did ſob up to God the equity of our cauſe: But now ſince our number is multiplied, eſpecially the Duke with his friends have joyned with us, nothing was heard, but ſuch a Lord will bring ſo many hundred ſpears, and this man hath credit to perſwade the Countrey. And thus we who felt Gods potent hand for our defence, have of late made fleſh our arme.* And a little after ſaith, *it reſteth that we returne to our God, the Eternal God, who bears down to the death, that he may raiſe up again: and to leave a remembrance of his wondrous deliverance to*

the praiſe of his own name, which if we do unfainedly: I more doubt, that this confuſion and fear ſhall be turned into joy honour and boldneſs, than I doubt that God gave victory to th Iſraelits, after they had beene twice repulſed. Yea, whatever be come of us, I doubt not but this cauſe in deſpite of Satan ſhall re triumph in this Realme, for as its the eternal truth of God, ſo ſ it once prevaile, though for this time it be impugned, yea it may be God ſhall plague ſome, becauſe they delight not in the truth, bu for worldly reſpects favour it: and take away ſome of his deare children, but neither ſhall the one or other hinder this work, but i end it ſhall triumph. Hiſt. Reform. Pag. 209. 210. The ver- ification of which did in a short time moſt remarkeabl follow.

SECT. 8. SUch was the Lords marvellous appearanc then in the behalf of his Church after ſo lon a night of Antichriſtian darkneſs; as a few years, ye moneths did bring forth that, which would have ſeeme improbable for an age to accomplish; that we find be twixt the ſuffering of the laſt *Martyr* for the truth then *Walter Mill*, who was burnt at *St Andrews April* 155 . an the eſtabliſhment of the Proteſtant Religion and civil San- ction to the Confeſſion of faith, by the three Eſtates of th Nation, with a full abolishment of Popery, which fol- lowed that Treaty and tranſaction at *Leith* with the *Frenc in July* 1560. was but little above *two years*, to ſhew wha great things the Lord can do above that his people coul either think or ask, and how ſometimes one year may bring forward that, which could not have been expected i many.

SECT. 9. THough it was not long before a sharp an ſearching trial was upon the *Queen's* arri- val from *France*, and theſe eſſayes put on foot by ſubtilty to accomplish what open force could not do, Some me- morable providences therewith are alſo worthy to be no- ticed

ced. 1. That remarkeable preſage at her very firſt arri-
al of what after followed, when ſo extraordinary appea-
nce the face of the heavens had, that beſides the ſurface
moiſt, and corruption of the air, ſuch a miſt then was
ith a thick darkneſs, as ſcarce any could eſpy another for
little way, that day of her arrival, and two dayes after,
or did the Sun once ſhine all that time to the diſcerning of
ny, ſo as it is ſet down in the *Hiſtory* of the Church, a
nore dolorous and aſtonishing face of the heaven hath not
een ſince the memory of man, and in ſuch a time of the
ear. 2. The Lords breaking of the moſt viſible eſſayes,
hich then was againſt the Proteſtant intereſt, as in that
emorable deliverance at that battel in the North againſt
he *Earle of Huntly*, where the ſtrength of the Popiſh party
as much joyned, and a few on the Proteſtant ſide, but
ith ſuch a marvellous aſſiſtance, as they broke that ar-
ny, even whilſt by a correſpondence a conſiderable
umber of thoſe that were joyned with them, fell in with
he enemy in the very heat of the fight. At which time of
o remarkeable a ſtrait, *Secretary Lethington* being then pre-
ent with the *Earle of Murray*, made a publick reference to the
Lord by prayer in the heat of the conflict, to decide in the
uſtneſs of their cauſe betwixt them and the Adverſary, and
moſt ſurpriſing victory quickly followed. The *Earle of*
Huntly was killed, who was next to the *Queene*, the moſt
leading perſon to promote the Popiſh intereſt, and carried
dead upon an horſe to the Church in *Aberdene*, where the
Lady Petſligo a grave and godly woman, amongſt others
who came to ſee him, burſt out in amazement in theſe
words. *What ſtability is there in humane affairs. For this is*
his body here lying upon the ground in ſo poor and deſpicable a man-
ner, who this very morning was by all judged the richeſt, wiſeſt,
and moſt powerfull of any of the nation. 3. That memorable
deliverance the Church had a few years after, againſt the
Queens party at the battel of *Langſide*, by that truely good
Regent the *Earle of Murray*, where the Lords immediate
deciſion

decision might be discerneable to all, whilst the very Protestant interest there, seemd to be at the stake, and in such visible hazard. 4. It was write in greatest letters, for after ages to notice, that stupendious judgment in the tragic close of this *Queen*, who wanted not notable accomplishments of nature, but had still contended, how to weake the Protestant interest, yea to divide and break them amongst themselves, after her returne from *France*.

SECT. 10. IT is true, the sufferings of the Church of *Scotland* resisting to blood for the truth, was not in such measure then, as in other Churches, though these few, who were thus called to seal the truth and testimony of Christ, was most remarkeably owned with his Countenance: but these also would be considered. 1. How then the Lord did in an extraordinary way call his people to an active testimony, and with such an immediat power on the Spirits of all ranks, as put them in so short a time in capacity, for appearing against the cruel tyranny of their Adversaries, that to this present time it may be as a continued wonder before us. 2. We may see in what an other manner the Lord hath exercised his Church there, more than any other Churches, with such sore continued conflicts upon the *Government of his house, and purity of Worship*, that it may be truely said, it hath been the lot of the Church of *Scotland* to have a more continued wrestling part with remarkeably searching trials, than any of the Churches abroad, and it may be said, that the part and service of this Church peculiarly allotted her since the Reformation, hath been to contend for the crown & prerogative Royal of Jesus Christ as the supreme head and King over his Church, and on this great interest have the trials of his people been most remarkeably stated.

SECT. 11. WHilst after sweet and comfortable calme the Church had from that former bondage

of Popery, there wanted not new aſſaults from ſuch, who ſought to invade the liberties of the Kingdome of Chriſt there, and in a more ſubtil manner, with cloſſer approaches followed the ſame: It was ſeen and may be inſtructing to this day, what viſible marks of judgment did the holy God put in the very entry of this trial on ſuch, as did firſt adventure to bear down the liberties of the Church there. As 1. The *Earle of Morton*, one otherwiſe of moſt excellent endowments, who had been zealous againſt Popery, but obſerveably ſwayed with that ſad predominant of *Covetouſneſs*, which (whilſt he was Regent, to have ſome legal claime to the Biſhops revenues) put him to eſſay ſome new mould for their eſtabliſhment, with ſome abridgement of their power, that thus by compact he and others of the nobility then might have a conſiderable ſhare of the Church rents: but as both the end and midſes he followed for attaining thereto were ſinful, and this was the firſt aſſault to the Government of the Reformation. We may ſee a remarkeable beacon for after times in the holy Judgment of the Lord ſet up thereon: in his being *thrown down, arraigned upon treaſon, beheaded, and his eſtate brought under forfaulture* though not without ſome convincing evidences at his death of ſerious repentance; and then did he call to remembrance Mr *Knox* laſt words to him whilſt he was on his death bed; *How the Lord had given him, both wiſdome, riches and honour, and then was calling him to the Government of the nation, (for at this time he was choſen Regent) and that he would be careful to improve theſe for the Lord and good of his Church: but if otherwiſe aſſured him of a ſad fall, and that his end ſhould be ſhame and ignominy.* 2. It was upon his fall, that violent man the *Earle of Arran*, then got up to the publick Government of the Nation, whoſe great aime was, but with more rage and fury, than had been formerly eſſayed, to break the *Government* of the Church, and bring it in ſubordination to the Civil Magiſtrat: but in a few years did the righteous God ſo conſpicuouſly break him, as *he was enforced to flie from*

from the Court, and retire in disgrace, is put out of all publick trust, and at last upon the high way, by a strange surprise of providence, was assaulted, and killed dead upon the place by my Lord Torthorrel, a friend of the late *Earle of Morton*, and in revenge of his death. And for these wretched Church men, who then vigorously concurred, in such an attempt, such as *Mr John Douglas*, *Mr Patrick Adamsone*, with some others also that followed after, a signal remarke of the holy Judgment of the Lord, was then made as notour before the world, as their defection from the truth had been: but having given some account thereof else where, I forbeare now to touch it further.

Sect. 12. WE may see in those times after the Reformation how there wanted not still some great and extraordinary Instruments sent forth for the service of the Church; of whom I have formerly given some account, as it might be clear to us of something from the Lord of an extraordinary and Apostolick Spirit with them; but since it is congruous to the present subject, and that I hope it may be for edification to the Reader, I shall yet add but some few passages more anent two of those Instances whom I have else where touched. These great servants of Jesus Christ in their time Mr *Robert Bruce* & Mr *John Welch* having such a convincing assurance of the truth thereof 1. As to Mr *Bruce*, after he had studied the Lawes in *France*, and was by his Fathers direction commanded after his returne, to wait on the Court and Session for his affaires there having a patent ensured for his being made one of the Lords of the Session, it was then the Lord began to work mightly upon his Conscience, so as he could find no rest untill he went to *St Andrewes* to Mr *Andrew Melvin*, to study *Theology*, which his mother so much opposed, till he first denuded himself of some lands and casualities wherein he was infeft (his Father at that time being a *Baron* of great quality in the nation) and thus did he willingly shake

l impediments, laying aſide his Court apparrel, to fol-
w the Lord. But whilſt the was there, did not want
me sharp conflicts in this matter, ſo as walking at a cer-
in time in the fields with that holy man Mr *James Melvin*,
ſaid, *before I caſt my ſelf again in that torment of Conſcience,*
hich I have had in reſiſting the call of God to the Miniſtry, I
uld rather chooſe to paſs through a fire of brimſtone, were it
lf a mile long. After he had been for the truth enforced to
ave the Countrey, (which was ſeveral years after this,
d his ſetling in the Miniſtry) upon his returne he was ad-
rtiſed by *Chancelor Seton*, of the Kings expreſs order to
ſcharge him to preach, yet ſaid, he would not uſe his
uthority, but only requeſt him to deſiſt for *nine or ten dayes*,
hich he conſented to, thinking it was a ſmall import for
ſhort a time: but he quickly found, how deep the ſmal-
ſt ceding upon his Maſters intereſt may draw, ſo (as he
ewed after) that *night his body was caſt into a feaver with the*
ror of his Conſcience, and he promiſed never to obey their com-
nds any more. The manner of his death I have elſe where
uched. He had much longing deſires before that, for his
ange, ſo as ſometimes he ſaid, *I wonder how I am kept by my*
aſter ſo long here, ſince I have lived already two years in violence.
leaning that he was then 72. years of age. From a grave &
inent Miniſter of Chriſt, who was intimate with Mr
uce, I had this further account, how one day viſiting
m at his houſe, it was long before he came out of his
dy. But found by his face he had been weeping bit-
rly, and after told him ſome occaſion of his grief,
at having heard of the ſharp ſufferings of a godly Mi-
ſter of the Goſpel, in another Countrey for the truth,
upon the ſame account for which he had ſuffered
nfinement himſelf: He ſaid, *If I had been faithful,*
ight have alſo ſhed ſome of my blood for Chriſt as well as he,
e he hath got the Crown from us all: And that my grief was not
what befell that godly man, but for my ſelf. He had alſo
ated from him in private, a ſtrange dreame: *How he had*

ſee

ſeen a great long book with black broads flieing in the Air, wi many black fowles like crowes about the ſame, and as it touched a of them, they fell down dead, upon which he heard a voice, whi he ſaid, was as audible, as he then heard him ſpeak to him: Ha eſt ira Dei contra Paſtores Eccleſiæ Scoticanæ. *Whereup he preſently fell a weeping, and crying to God, that he might kept faithful, and not be one of thoſe, that were thus ſtruck dow by a touch of his wrath, through deſerting the truth. And ſai when he awaked he found the pillow all wet, and drench with his tears.* This was at a remarkeable time alſo the defection of many Miniſters there from the way the Lord.

Sect. 13. THis further account anent that famous Se vant of Chriſt, *Mr John Welch* to what h been formerly published. I ſhall here give in ſome few pa ticulars, which I hope may be confirming & edifying to t Reader. 1. That witneſs he bore for the Lord, upon h journey to the Aſſembly of the Church at *Aberdene*, when on his after impriſonment and exile was ſtated; and abo which he had been ſo much preſſed upon his Spirit to g thither, for owning the Liberties of the Churc 1, whi ſo viſibly were then ſtruck at by the Magiſtrat. His wor I ſhall ſet down. „ Never a greater providence found I „ my life time, nor I found this laſt time in my journe „ And here I thank my God for it, and I avow, that if t „ blood of mine ſhould goe for it, it was acceptable ſervi „ we did to God that day. I know there were many, wh „ ſent up their Prayers to God for the maintenance of t „ Liberty of the Church, which I am ſure the Lord hear „ And I can ſay, the roome was never yet that I came t „ but I found the Lord meeting me there, and confirmi „ that as acceptable to him, ſo as I never found a ſweet „ providence ſince I was borne, and ſees that the Lor „ hand is not ſhortned. O Scotland, O that thou wo „ repent and mourne for the contempt of ſo great a Lig t

„ that hath shined in thee, thou shouldest see as glorious
„ a day of the power of God in this *Island*, as ever was
„ seen in any Church before, What is it to the Lord?
„ And let any think of it what they will, I know who
„ has approved me, for it is the runing of the Gospel
„ through this whole *Island*, and that the net of Christ
„ may be spread over all, that if it were possible we may
„ sang in a world into it, that they might not perish. is
„ that which we seek. And when I look to that eternity
„ of wrath abiding the wicked, I must say, who would
„ not pity a world of sinners. This was preached by him
at *Air*, a very little before his imprisonment, which having
occasion to see, as it was writen from his own mouth, I
thought truely worthy of Remarke, and to set down
here. 2. As also that Testimony he gave in publick
against that great assault, the Church was then meeting
„ with from *Prelacy*. I know there will come a shaking
„ time. and the glory of the world will bewitch many,
„ but tell me, received ye the Spirit of God by this Lordly
„ Ministery of the *Prelats*, or by the pure Ministry of
„ his Servants? And shall we *begin in the Spirit and end*
„ *in the flesh*? This truth we have believed, professed
„ and subscribed, the King and Nobility abjuring also
„ and condemning that wicked Hierarchy of the Church.
„ This is a thing that hath been spoken long since, that
„ there behoved to be a trial in *Scotland*. If this new
„ erected Domination be it, I leave it to the Lord; but if
„ ever I had familiarity with him, and if ever his Spirit
„ sealed any part of the Scripture to me, the purity of
„ the Gospel, and Kingdome that hath been in this *Island*,
„ was from God. And that this new erected King-
„ dome of *Prelacy* is not from him, was sealed to my
„ Conscience, and those are names of *Blasphemy*, (for I
„ count him a blasphemer, who takes to him the proper
„ stiles that belong to the Lord) since there is but *one*
„ *Lord*, and ye shall not be called such, saith *Christ* to

„ his *Disciples*, *but if any desire to be great*, *let him be your*
„ *Servant*. Is it not the marke of the woman cloathed
„ with the Sun, that is persecuted in the wilderness,
„ and has the Moon under her feet? but it is the mark of
„ the beast, that speaks blasphmies against God, and
„ maks war with the Saints. 3. Some predictions he
then had of what was to come, were indeed remarkea-
ble, as he expressed in publick, neer the same time,
where he thus speaks. „ Prepare you for crosses, for
„ I am thinking there is something to follow, on this
„ falling of the Starrs to the Earth, and that these
„ Golden Apples are offered to Ministers, & men are be-
„ come earthly minded, who were wount to be capable
„ of Spiritual things. there must be a fiery trial to follow
„ with it, *and at another time*. There is a sword coming,
„ which shall be drunk with blood, the Lord knowes
„ from whence it shall come, but I cannot be quite of it,
„ but that this Land, which is defiled with blood, must
„ be cleansed with blood again; but if we could be hum-
„ bled, and run to God by prayer, it may be, he would
„ send peace in our dayes. Remember this poor Church,
„ that's like to be brought under with their masked and
„ men sworne abominations, which are creeping in piece
„ and piece. Remember these things with tears, and I
„ am assured, that the Lord shall send as glorious a de-
„ liverance to this Church, as was ever heard of. These
few Notes, having such assurance of the truth thereof,
I thought worthy to be noticed. That Testimony he
gives also to the Cross of Christ after his *exile*, in a letter
to my *Lady Marr* out of *France*; having the same by me,
I shall here touch. „ I thank my God in Christ, for all
„ the gracious consolation it pleaseth him to vouchsafe on
„ me in the dayes of my affliction, whereby I perceive
„ the good pleasure of his will ro Minister unto me com-
„ fort, that not only with patience, but with joy I may
„ bear his Cross, and I dare not but give Testimony,

that

„that the Lord has been faithful in his promises, and „has remembred his mercy and Covenant towards me, „has made his *yoke easy and his burden light*, and has „made his consolations abound, far beyond all that ever „I yet suffered. Its true it cannot but be sometimes „grievous, to remember the glory that I have seen both „in publick and private in the Communion of the Saints, „from which I am now exiled; yet it pleaseth my Lord „to Minister such tranquillity of mind unto me, that I „cannot but wonder of, and of these exceeding great „and incredible joyes, wherewith I now see by expe„rience it pleases him to accompany his own cross. O „how Sweet a thing it is to suffer for Christ! How glo„rious and rich treasures are there, that ly hid under that „vile and ignominious vaile of the Cross. The World „yea the Princes and wise of this world, knowes not „the glorious & unspeakeable joyes, that are joyned with „the cross, yea who knowes it but he that hath experi„ence thereof. Certainly if the Adversary knew what „joy it were to the Children of God, to be under the „Cross, instead of being Instruments thereof, they „should envy them for so great a good. Blessed be my „Lord, that ever it was his will, and that it entred in „his heart, thus to make manifest his love to me, and „to vouchsafe this grace, in causing me to suffer for his „names sake so much. I thank my God in Christ, for „unto me it's a sure Argument of his accounting me „worthy of that Kingdome, for the which he hath „caused me with some gladness and joy to suffer, and „for the which to give some readiness to suffer more; „surely affliction is a Testimony and seale of the Love „of God.

Sect. 14. IN this hour of trial then on the Church of *Scotland*, when *Prelacy* was making so formidable assault, it is truely worthy of remarke, & to be transmitted

mitted to after times, with what zeale and seriousnes the faithful Ministers of Christ then were concerned to stand in the breach, as Interceffors betwixt an highly provoked God, and his people, under whose hand so great a ruine was like to fall, which in two Instances, (besides many else might be given) I shall touch, having such assured evidence of the truth, and certainty thereof. 1. In the *Year* 1596. upon *Tuesday* the *thirtieth of March*, The Ministers and other Commissioners of the *Generall Assembly met at Edinburgh*, found it duty by themselves to conveene in the Church at nine a clock. One of the doores being shut, and the other kept open for the meeting only; for humbling themselves and wrestling with God, to pursue a National, as well as a personal Reconciliation, the whole number amounting to *four hundred* of Ministers and some select Christians and Elders of the Church with them. Where after prayer, and *Mr John Davidsone*, (whose life I have elsewhere touched,) chosen to preside amongst them, he caused the *third* and *thirty fourth Chapters of Ezekiel* to be read, & then said, „ Seeing it „ had pleased the Lord to move them to choose him, who „ was the unworthiest & unmeetest of the number for that „ place, of a preacher that day, they were not to look „ that he came to be censured by them, but to use the au- „ thority of a Teacher, as to hearers, without any preju- „ dice to that Liberty given them of the Lord, to try the „ Spirits, whether they be of God or not. He shewed, „ what was the end of their meeting, that it was the con- „ fessionof sins, and to promise a forsaking thereof, „ to turne unto the Lord, and enter into a New Covenant „ & League with him, that thus by repentance they might „ be the meeter to provoke others to the same. In which he was followed with that power for moving of their Spirits in application, that within an hour after they were entred into the Church, they look't with an other Countenance than that wherewith they entered. And whilst he

he exhorted them to that retired work of meditation and acknowledgement of their ſins, whilſt then together, for the ſpace of a quarter of an hour, they were thus humbling themſelves, yea ſuch a joint concurrance with thoſe ſighs and groans, and with ſhedding of tears amongſt the moſt, every one provoking another by their example, and the Teacher himſelf by his, ſo as the very Church refounded, and that place might worthily be called *Bochim*, for the like of that day had not been ſeen in *Scotland*, ſince the Reformation, after prayer and publick Confeſſion, he treated upon that Scripture *Luk* 12. 22. wonderfully aſſiſted by the Spirit of the Lord for the work, both of caſting down and raiſing up, which exerciſe continued, till neer one a clock afternoone. And when they were to diſſolve, they did there ſolemnely joyne, and enter into a new League and Covenant with God, holding up their hands thereto, with that ſerioufneſs and weight, as was a moving ſight to all preſent. And that afternoone by the *General Aſſembly*, was the renewing of the Covenant in particular Synodes concluded.

SECT. 15. AT the *Synode of Fife* met at *Dumfermlin May* 12. 1596. where *Mr James Melvin* did preſide as *Moderator*. The Articles for *Reformation* of the Church ſet down in the laſt Aſſembly were read in publick, and ordained to be inſert, and thereafter did *Mr Melvin* gravely diſcourſe upon the *Laſt Chapter of Joſhuah*, with that evidence and demonſtration of the power of God therewith, as all who were there were enforced to a ſtrange and unuſual motion, with groans and tears, yea then to ſome retired perſonal meditation for ſearching each of them their own wayes. And after ſome time did he make publick confeſſion in name of the reſt, of unthankfulneſs, undutifulneſs, negligence, coldneſs of Spirit, inſtability, unſuteableneſs in ſpeech and converſation, as too viſibly faſhioned after the world, yea

yea thus with trembling and weeping, for the misusage of so honourable a calling, and the fear and dread of that weight of the wrath of God lying over them, for the blood of so many souls belonging to their charge, did then weep bitterly, and powre out their souls before the Lord, pleading for grace, and an effectual help to be strengthned against these evils. After which, the Lord having been so marvellously present, a minute of this solemne work was by consent of the Synode to be insert both for their own use, and an example to posterity in the publick Register.

Chap. VII.

Sect. 1. Having some occasion to touch this subject of the Lords marvellous appearances for the *Church in Scotland*, in that great work of Reformation from Popery, wherein I designed only but a short account, which otherwise, were it followed, should be a work by it self. Before I leave this I hope it may not be unsuteable to speak a few words concerning the present state of the *Church* of Christ there; which with some confidence, as before the Lord, I may say, is far from bitterest of Spirit, prejudice at the persons of any, or intended reflection that way: But for the truths sake, upon which the trials of his people have been so remarkeably there stated, which in some few *particulars*, I hope *in the words of truth, and soberness*; I shall here offer.

Sect. 2. First, It is known, how very sad, as to all visible appearances, the case of the Church there hath been and now is; by the blessed disposal of the Lord, whose wayes are holy and just, and thus graciously secs

y sees fit to assigne a different lot and service, not only to everal ages, but to particular Churches; he hath in aithfulness put this cup of trial and affliction in his peoples hand; and now for *sixteen years* past hath a most remarkeably suffering time gone over their head, not as to he Ministers there only, who found grace to abide faithful, and *keep the word of his patience* in this hour of great emptation: But most universally through the whole and, to Christians of all ranks and conditions, yea in uch a manner, with that frequency of assaults, as I judge, f a particular account were given, it could hardly be credited at a distance; and which is astonishing, that no ength of time, no appearances of the Lord, nor these nost obvious Remarkes the Adversary might have had f his hand being against them, both in their Councils nd actings for this end, have yet been a let thereto; but t this day their violence seemes to be a length beyond all ath formerly beene, and the waters to grow without ny discerneable abatement thereof, yea I must say, uch a *persecution* under these circumstances is now ollowed; as cannot easily find a *paralel* from any times ast.

ECT. 3. FOr the cause & grounds hereof, though it may be judged, that few at a distance are so unoncerned, with whom the Protestant Interest hath any egard, as not to enquire and know, why the Reformed Church of *Scotland* should be thus exposed to these sore nd continued sufferings, (nor hath there hitherto wanted some serious endeavours for clearing of this to the vorld) yet I may say, (under some weight of present duty, nd I hope it may not be unseasonable, or unnecessary) m pressed to give this short account to any, who enuire, and would designe an establishment of their Spit in the way of the Lord, *That in opposition to Prelacy, so expresly contrary to the rule of the Scripture, and in adherence*

to this cause and truth, that Jesus Christ is a King, and hath a Kingdome and Government in his Church distinct from the Kingdoms of the world, or any Civil Government there. A truth, to which he did himself so expressly bear witness, and sealed with his blood, and for standing fast by these dearly purchased liberties thereof, hath this sad and long continued persecution of his Church and people there been observeably stated. Nor can this be strange that such as ever knew the fellowship of the Cross of Christ, and what it was to have their soul under the power and Authority of the truth, should be found so tenacious and peremptory in their testimony to so great a piece of his intereſt, whilst it is now called for in the season thereof, yea to rejoice in their sufferings upon such an account, when these are so undeniably clear, about which I may say, (not of late) I have sought to have my own Spirit perswaded.

1. That the great *Lawgiver and Head of his Church* doth so expresly discharge all *Lordship and Dominion* over his Church, yea therewith also all titles of honour to be assumed by them, not to these only who by his institution are fixed Officers of his house, until his second coming, but even to his Apostles, who then were extraordinary Officers, both as to their calling and endowments in the Church, as is *clear Luke* 22: 24, 25. *Matth.* 20: 25.

2. That it is manifest, the Government of the Church under the New Testament is so evidently *Aristocratick*, with a parity amongst the Officers of Christ in the Administration of their power, and a subordination of the lesser parts to the greater, and for this that Apostolick patterne and practice held forth for after ages so express, and which so clearly holds out not only what was *de facto* their *practice*; but as *a rule* binding *de jure* to the Church, and a piece of the word written for our instruction, to be kept till the *second coming of Christ*, 1 *Tim.* 6. *vers.* 4. Yea on such moral and perpetual grounds is held forth, as in *Act.* 15. and other Scriptures, convincingly clear.

3. That

3. That it is manifeſt, (and I judge few can be ſo groſly ignorant amongſt the Adverſaries themſelves to debate this;) that the name, office, qualifications and ordination of a *Biſhop* held forth in the word, hath no reſpect further, than to all the Miniſters of the Goſpel, and that a *Biſhop*, which in the Original is an *Overſeer of the flock* only, and a preaching *Presbiter*, is one and the ſame office; for as the one holds forth *ejus induſtriam*, ſo the other *Sapientiæ maturitatem*, which I leave to any to conſider in comparing theſe Scriptures, *Act.* 20: *verſ.* 28. 1 *Pet.* 1: *verſ.* 2. *Phil:* 1: *verſ.* 1. *Tit.* 1: *verſ.* 5. conſidered with, *verſ.* 7.

4. That it is demonſtratively clear, Jeſus Chriſt hath given to the Church and Officers thereof, the power of the keyes for diſcipline and Government, *in foro externo*, and where that Scripture *gradation* is ſo obſerveable for the Churches edification in the way of diſcipline, and cenſures; that it is *from one to two*, *or more*, and from them to the Church, as *Matth.* 18: 15, 16. Likewiſe from a leſſer to an higher judicatory as *Act.* 15. whilſt on the contrary by this eſtabliſhment of *Prelacy* the courſe is viſibly retrograde, from many to one, in whom the final deciſion muſt reſt. And it is ſure, if the rule of the written word have weight, the Government of the Church under the New Teſtament is committed not to one, but to a plurality of Presbiters, who are not only to feed, but to overſee by an expreſs appointment of the holy Ghoſt, *Act.* 20: 28. Yea the higheſt Acts of Juridiction, ſuch as *excommunication* is committed to the Church and ordinary Officers thereof, we may ſee *Matth.* 18: 16, 17. 1 *Cor.* 5: 4. Yea how this was not practiſed by one, but by many 2 *Cor.* 2: 6. *That cenſure being inflicted by many*, &c. as alſo the power of *Ordination*, 1 *Tim.* 4: *verſ.* 14. which was to *be by the laying on of the hands of the Presbitery*, ſo as both the *keyes* of Doctrine and diſcipline are expreſly committed to the Community of

Presbiters, without giving the greatest *Prelate*, that ever claimed such a title, any roome by himself there.

5. In all the New Testament such an *Office* as this of *Prelacy* distinct from an ordinary Pastor, cannot possibly be found, but whilst that *Roll* and *Catalogue* of the Officers of the Church of Christ, and their qualifications, even to the Office of a *Deacon*, is so expres, both as to ordinary and extraordinary Officers, is clear 1 *Cor.* 12: 28. *Eph.* 4: 11: 12. There can be found no such Office of Scripture & Apostolick institution here, as a *Bishop* over his pretended *Diocese*: and I hope it is not under debate, that the Scripture and patterne of the Apostolick Church is more ancient and Authentick, than any practice of after-times, whilst the streames began early to be polluted, and this mystery of iniquity in that pretended *Hierarchy* and precedence in the Church did even in the dayes of Apostles begin to stirre.

6. It is clear that what ever of a *double honour* by the Scripture is given and allowed to *Officers* of the Church; is upon no ground of *Preheminence in Jurisdiction*: but their *labouring in the word and Doctrine*, 1 *Tim.* 5: *vers.* 17. which I judge is an act, whereon no *Prelate* will challenge a singularity above the ordinary Pastors of the Church, nor upon that ground *Mal.* 2: 7. *that the Priests lips should preserve knowledge*, who account the preaching of the word so far below the grandour of their Office, except at some extraordinary, and festival time.

7. As there is a beautiful order in the Christian Church, which we may see in the first times thereof, and a further degree & place, which these extraordinary Officers of Christ, his Apostles then had above ordinary Pastors, whose endowments also were extraordinary for that time, which I judge no *Bishop* can claime to; yet is there no such thing, in an Office of the same kind, as a majority of power or priority of degree, not an *Apostle* above an *Apostle*, or one *Evangelist* above another; or one *Dea-*

con

con above another: and should there be only in the Office of Ministers an inequality? It is sure the Scripture hath no such warrant for inverting such an excellent order.

8. And is it not on the same ground of an expedience and warrantableness of a *Bishop* over a *Dioceſe*, or a *Primate* over a National Church, for preserving unity, that by undeniable consequence an *universal Bishop* over all the Churches must follow, as a gradual difference betwixt them: Yea how the *Romish Hierarchy* did first begin there, it may be demonstrably evident.

9. If that power given to the Officers of the Church of Christ be alone Ministerial, to declare and execute his will, and but one Lord over his house, it must then be undeniable, that *Prelacy* is unconsistent therewith, which is so clear an incroaching on his *Regal* and *Despotical power*, as Master over his house. And it is remarkeable, how the Apostle *Peter*, on whom any such claime of *Hierarchy* in the Church hath been first founded, is so express, 1 *Pet.* 5: 3. *Not as being Lords over Gods heritage, but examples to the flock.*

10. Doth not this *Office* visibly bring therewith a confounding two distinct *Jurisdictions* and callings in one person, as it is incompatible with the Kindome of Christ, which is *spiritual, and not of this world*, so also with the condition of his servants, who are not to entangle themselves with the affaires of this life; but give *themselves to the word and prayer*, so as the Apostles counted even the service of tables, and administring to the poor extrinsick to their proper work and calling.

11. Besides, that the sad and undeniable experience of this way, as destructive to the Church, and that which is the end of Church Government, the edification of the body, doth not this of its own nature most evidently tend to bring in ambition into the Church? Against which the *Apostle John* with such indignation speaks in his second Epistle, *vers.* 9. in the person of *Diotrephes*, to give loose raines

raines to prophanity, whilst that which should be the proper work of many to oversee, *(and who is sufficient for these things)* is here put wholly over upon one, and but a shaddow thereof left to inferiour Officers.

12. And can it be strange, that all who truely loves the truth there, should with such seriousnes be prest in their adherence to the Government of Christ in his Church, which they know to be that good and old way, wherein so innumerable a company of most known, tender, solide and lively Christians, since that blessed Reformation of the Church there from Popery, *have received the Spirit*, and been *sealed* to the day of Redemption: Yea have found such abounding comforts of the holy Ghost to their Testimony, and suffering upon this interest, and which also hath had so eminent an attestation, by the conversion as well as building up of many thousands now taken up into glory, *and pillars in his temple, where they shall no more goe out.* Yea such a piece of the truth of Christ, to which so great a witnes hath been borne, by many of the most eminent servants of the Lord, of whom in sobriety I may say, there hath not been greater known to the Church, since the times of the Apostles, by whose wrestlings, prayers, tears and sufferings, it hath been through the good hand of the Lord upon them, transmitted to us, and which is not our interest alone, but a trust we stand under to posterity.

I shall but further add that indispensable obligation the Churches of Christ in *Britain* and *Ireland* more peculatly now stands under, by the *oath* and *Covenant of God*, which though it were in a thing indifferent, should be determining, how much more when this solemne tye is but superadded to that, which in it self doth so clearly, and on moral grounds, bind and obleidge?

Sect. 4. IT may be matter of astonishment how much the sufferings of the *Church of Scotland*, have been heightned, and now are, by the adventuring of the Ministers of Christ there, upon the authority of their Master, to preach the Gospel amongst the people, notwithstanding of the Magistrats discountenance and prohibition: When both a convincing necessity, and their longing desires to heare did enforce a call hereto; yea how this should be challenged in a land, where the Scripture, and Doctrine of the Reformed Religion is not publickly disowned. It hath been far from the least intended irritation, to provoke any, much less the Magistrat, I can say with the furtheſt assurance, and would judge, that the Adversaries themselves doe allow these so far the use and exercise of reason, nor can want some inforcing conviction of this on their Conscience; that they would not expose themselves to such visible hazard, labour, wearinesse, with many pressing difficulties that may, yea with so little of any known outward encouragement, if some greater interest did not preponder it, which should ly more neer, than all enjoyments in the earth: That it is the service of their blessed Master, for which nothing must be too deare, so as they *may finish their course with joy, and the Ministery, which they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God.* But since many upon mistake, or at a distance may be prejudged, or put to some enquiry here anent: I hope it shall not be found unnecessar, to give this short touch, what pressing constraint of duty the Ministers of Christ here, are under, for adventuring thus, and on grounds so convincingly clear. 1. That it is a matter of *Confession*, as to their Ministery and the authority thereof from Jesus Christ alone, though in a mediate way by the Church, and upon a hazard greater than all the Kings of the Earth can threaten, which is not their's to subject unto the Civil Power, yea with this further enforcement

thereto

thereto, that this reſtraint now put upon them to exerce their Miniſtery is expreſly owned by vertue of that *ſupremacy*, aſſumed by the Magiſtrat over all *Church cauſes, as well as perſons*, and as being the fountain of Church power: A claime, which without the furtheſt of blaſphemy, is incommunicable to Angels or men, which is the alone prerogative of the Son of God, the Head and Builder of his Church. 2. That their Miniſtery both in its Office and exerciſe comes under no ſentence of the Civil Magiſtrat, what ever ſubjection they own as to their perſons, and outward concernes: Nor can a reſtraint be put upon them here, to make void that authority and warrrant they have from Jeſus Chriſt, and conveyed by his Church; but as an Eccleſiaſtick Cenſure. 3. That it is clear the great Commiſſion wherewith they are cloathed to preach the Goſpel bounds them to no particular place, but their primary relation is ſuch to the Church univerſal, ſo as where ever they be, and upon an evident call, they ſtand there related, as the Miniſters of Chriſt to diſpenſe his Ordinances. 4. And is it not morally binding and of force to the times of the New Teſtament, as well as of the Old, *that the Prieſts Lipps ſhould preſerve knowledge and the people to ſeek the Law at their mouth, the Meſſengers of the Lord of Hoſts. Mal* 1. 7. Yea ſhould be the more preſſing at ſuch a day, when evident hazard is to many from *Atheiſme*, *Quakeriſme*, and *Popery:* and many alſo ready to be fainted under the preſſures of an afflicting time: How Onerous and preſſing a duty it is *to comfort the feebleminded, to ſupport the weak* 1 *Theſ.* 5: *verſ.* 14. to draw forth the breaſts to the hungry, unto whom the Ordinances of Chriſt are ſuteable to be as their very natural food, and have ſuch continued need to be confirmed thereby. 5. Yea it is under greater penalty than any Magiſtrat can threaten. They ſtand accountable for diſcharge of that Talent, given

hem of the Lord, *with a neceſſity laid upon them, to reach the Goſpel of Chriſt* 1 Cor. 9: 16. Who have their Maſters eye continually upon them, how they anſwere o that power and truſt committed to his Miniſters; that n ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon they ſhould follow their work nd no latitude here for ſubjecting it to humane rules, here the great Lawgiver hath given forth his mind. . No contempt of the Magiſtrats Authority or juſt power an be obtruded in this matter, except they own it upon is; that the Miniſters of the Goſpel in *Scotland* dare admit o unlimited, or implicite obedience to their Acts; but ith a preference herein to the expreſs Commands of eir Maſter, and whether it be better to obey God than an, (if they own ſubjection to the Scripture) let their wn Conſcience then judge. 7. It is ſure, no ſuch de- te was in the primitive times of the Church, whilſt e Roman Emperours, (though heathen) were in things wful owned, and ſubjected to, as the Magiſtrat, when e Miniſters of Chriſt then, in oppoſition to all their dicts, and greateſt fury of perſecution, ceaſed not to each the Goſpel, yea, and this way, (that is now called irregular and ſeditious) was not the Chriſtian Church, r the firſt two Centuries, with ſuch marvellous appea- nce of the power of God, brought in and built up? d as it is the ſame Truth and Doctrine, which is now eached, I hope that with much confidence we may n the ſame ſcope to prejudge none, much leſs the Ma- trats in their right; but to purſue the Treaty of the ſpel, with all ſeriouſneſs for their embracing that great er of reconciliation by Chriſt, & to preſs the indiſpen- ly neceſſar ſtudy of holineſs. But if Magiſtrats this in being Chriſtians pretend ſome higher power and thority, I hope they muſt take themſelves to the Bible this warrant, and ſhew if they have ſuch power given, tend what they will, which is deſtructive to the truth to counteract the expreſs Inſtitutions of Jeſus Chriſt

in his

in his Word. Oh how ſad and aſtoniſhing is it, that when the great Lawgiver and Head of his Church hath given Princes and Rulers ſo fully their due, and eſtabliſhed their rights, they will thus dare to rob him of his, and keep no bounds nor marches with the Kingdome of Chriſt, but will thus break over to invade his intereſt *who muſt reigne until all his enemies be made his footſtoole*, and aſſuredly will carry back the warre on themſelves, and in his bleſſed time appear againſt ſuch ev neighbours, as will not *be wiſe, and inſtructed* this day *who are the judges of the earth*, and ſee theſe dreadf marks have been of an holy avenging God in the quarr of his Church upon the greateſt Kingdomes and State 8. This great truſt committed to the Miniſters of th Goſpel is not theirs only; but the intereſt of the poſter ty and generations to come, to ſtand cloſe by the truth & theſe dear bought liberties of the Kingdome of Chri 9. I muſt further add that convincing and undeniable ſe the Lord hath given to his own ordinances, and Min ſtery of his ſervants now *of late*, when under moſt v ſible threatnings and diſcountenance of the Magiſtra is ſuch, as this continued and amazing *oppoſition* there ſeemes to be a more than ordinary counteracting of ligh and *doing deſpight even to the Spirit of grace* under ſu clearevidences of his work.

SECT. 5. I muſt further add, in giving ſome account the preſent ſtate of the Church in *Scotla* now amidſt theſe ſad and aſtoniſhing times, which ha of late gone over her, how demonſtratively manif this is, if our eyes be not in a ſtrange manner with h from conſidering the work of God, and his app rances in mercy, as well as judgment, *that he hath forſaken his Church and people there, nor doth his m and tenderneſs faile*: But is ſuch, as we may this with no leſs aſtoniſhment ſee, yea to arreiſt our eyes h

with, in the great *reſtoring providences of this time*, than of ſuch as have been hitherto moſt breaking: and the gain thereof, for all that is come, which I fear not to ſay, hath a viſible proportion to the greateſt ſufferings and loſs; yea rather to exceed the ſame. And whilſt we wait & wonder, that the holy God comes not our way, who are thus too ready to ſtint our thoughts by limiting of him, he calls us to ſee him meeting his people another way, beyond all they ever could have thought of. This being a duty of ſuch weight, and that with ſome evident ſuteableneſs falls in with the preſent ſubject, to obſerve the great things of the Lord for his Church; yea a duty (could we be faithful therein) which wants not a promiſe to have more given in, and laid to our hands for obſervation. I ſhall but in a few words touch ſome convincing and memorable providences for his Church there, as ſome part of that rent and teſtimony of theſe ſad ſuffering times, to the way of the Lord.

1. This witneſs we muſt bear to what in theſe times he hath done for his Church there, and the greateſt *Atheiſts* may ſee, that not in an ordinary way of providence hath her intereſt and preſervation been hitherto carried on: But whilſt all viſible advantages were on the Adverſaries ſide, their enmity at ſuch a height, nor their will wanting to their power, yea with ſuch frequent aſſaults and different methods for a breaking of his poor Church, which we have ſeen with our eyes; yet is this truth ſure, *perſecute, but not forſaken: caſt down, but not deſtroyed*: the Church ſinking, but not perished, and amidſt the flame, but not conſumed, to witneſs that her God lives, and is ſtill the ſame, yea doth own the ſame intereſt, and cauſe; though his appearance now be in another manner.

2. We have yet ſeen, if we would ſeriouſly obſerve, no remarkeable concurrance of ſad and crushing things have been from the Lord for his peoples trial, but with ſome obvious tendency thereof to as manifold an uſe and advan-

tage, whilst in this, humane reason could never have supposed what hath been the product of these strange times, or have judged the conclusion by the premises.

3. In this time we have been called to that great appearance of the Lord against his Adversaries in their breaking, turning them out of their places, who had first moved, and the great leading Instruments to bring in *Prelacy*, and for breaking, so far as they could, the Church of *Scotland*, and cause so sad a ruine there Yea how this was in so short a time, when least expected, that diverse of them had not three years together, to enjoy that sad conquest they had sought, to found on the ruins of the work of God there, and share in that spoile, which with such confidence they had then divided amongst them. What I write hereof, with some confidence I may say, is with no prejudice to the persons of such, but should own the more tenderness and compassion to any, when once brought low: But since the holy Judgment of the Lord, and his glory herein is so eminently concerned, and that this convincing witness to the truth hath been written in greatest letters for the observation of the age: I could not pass it without some Remarke; yea to bring the remembrance thereof before others, who will adventure to follow that way, on which the holy God hath set up so remarkeable a Beacon before their eyes. Oh, that such would consider, what reward these have got, who so vigorously then acted for the *Prelatick* interest in *Scotland*, and how the foundation of it was laid in the visible ruine of such, as were the greatest promoters thereof, as a publick warning from the Lord against such a way, and that the curse then of *Hiel the Bethelite*, for building of that accursed place, against which the Lord served such an interdiction, hath not there fallen to the ground, and I am perswaded shall be made more remarkeable yet in the close: Yea, how that great man, who then acted in the highest place and Authority, should at last, after so remarkeable a fall, die in a remote place

of

of the world, and in a kind of exile, (what ever cover it had,) who turned ſo many of the Godly, both Miniſters and others from their dwellings, and ſome moſt eminent from their own land, and dipt his hand in the blood of ſome faithful and choice witneſſes to his truth. And his death by ſo ſtrange a fall, and in that aſtoniſhing manner circumſtantiat, as hath been shewed by ſome who were then in the place. It's true, the judgments of the Lord are a great depth, and with much fear and ſobriety ſhould we adventure to apply the ſame: but there may be no leſs to fear unfaithfulneſs in our being not more obſervers thereof, when in ſuch legible Characters they are oft written, ſo as all who run may read.

4. That publick witneſs, which hath in theſe times been given to the truth and cauſe, (on which the Church there is ſuffering) by ſome at their death, who did before vigorouſly oppoſe themſelves thereto, as it is an evidence of the Lords eminent appearance, and dominion he exerceth over the Conſciences of men, is a ſeal alſo to his truth, with the dying breath of ſuch, who were once known haters thereof, which ſhould call for a grave Remarke. There have not wanted ſignal Inſtances hereof: But amongſt others publickly known and notour, I ſhall give this general touch of two *Gentlemen* of Conſiderable *Note*, and Intereſt in the *Nation*; the One in the *Weſt* ſome years agoe, the Other but of late in the *South*, whoſe Conſciences were moſt remarkeably ſeized on by the dread and terror of God, to the amazement and inſtruction of all about them, moſt ſpecially for their being involved in the publick defection of the time, and for concurrance in the *abjuration* of the *Covenant*, which after much wreſtling with tears, whilſt the pain and anguiſh of their Spirits was diſcerneably above their ſickneſs, they did then witneſs, how above all, this guilt did moſt preſſingly touch them, and lay in the way betwixt their ſouls and peace with God: Yea with all ſeriouſneſs beſeeching others not to adventure on that which

drew ſo deep on their Conſciences; Though I muſt alſo add, they were not thus more publick Inſtructers to the *Nation*, how dreadful it is to give the intereſts of the Church a wrong touch, than Examples of the freedome and riches of Grace.

5. We have ſeen a change of weapons the Adverſary hath made, for having a ſnare thus laid in ambush, and with a ſmiling face, whilſt Adders poiſon was under their lipps; but yet ſo as the baite with their furtheſt care could not hide the hook, but that the Lord graciouſly hath ſtill helped to ſome clear diſcerning, and advertance thereto, even whilſt the net was moſt cloſely ſpread under their feet: Yea that moſt dreadful eſſay, that ever they followed, (with *Balak*) to lay a ſtumbling block in the Churches way for her halting, as the moſt aſſured mean to prevaile, and divide the Godly amongſt themſelves, hath been in ſome meaſure, through the good hand of the Lord made void, and I truſt ſhall be yet more, by ſome cloſe uniting of his peoples hearts there together, and with a more watching and Jealous eye over the plauſible inſinuations of ſuch, who are the known Adverſaries of the truth. Nor can it be paſt without a Remarke of the Righteous Gods recompenſing them with breaches of another kind.

6. The tryed faith and eſtabliſhment of his people in this ſearching time, is again beyond the ſaddeſt loſs we can reckon on, 1 *Pet.* 1: 7. *That the trial of your faith, which is more precious than that of Gold, may be to the praiſe, honour and glory at the appearance of Jeſus Chriſt*, anent which their enemies have been found Lyars, who had reckoned ere now to break and faint them from their duty. And it is ſure, the more ſharp and ſhaking a trial is, it is ſo much the more one of thoſe rare opportunities of a Chriſtians life to be ſeriouſly followed, that it be not loſt: Yea which, with ſome proportion to the meaſure thereof, ſhould bring in more abundant joy and peace, than any loſe or grief that hath gone before. And is ſuch an account, that through

grace

race hath been given to this Church there, to be ſmall in ur eyes.

7. That honourable Teſtimony given to the Croſs of Chriſt by ſo many ſuffering witneſſes, to the conviction and ſtonishment of their Adverſaries is ſuch (could an account e particularly given of what hath been remarkeable and ublick this way) as ſhould be a ſweet and large Record r confirming others in the truth: How they never knew vine ſtrength more ſenſibly, and the power of Chriſt ſting on them, than when called to ſuffer for his name, d were moſt preſſed above their own ſtrength, that there under the Croſs a length beyond report, or teſtimony of hers to be known, what ſweet hours of fellowship with od are to be then found; yea whilſt ſomething more than dinary hath met in their trial and ſuffering for the truth; w ſome peculiar, and more than ordinary allowance did en wait upon it, and what Company the Scripture hath en ſometimes in a priſon; or their neceſſary retirement m others, through the violence of theſe times, beyond they ever knew hereof before.

8. We have ſeen alſo the truth then have a moſt diſcer- able triumph when the Adverſary ſeemed moſt to pre- ile; yea thus to gain that intereſt by a ſuffering teſtimony ereto even on a ſcaffold, ſo as the begun fall of *Prelacy*, and oſt remarkeable ſpreading of the Kingdome of Chriſt rough the land might be ſeen to follow, yea that which ould have look't as hopeleſs, and an irrecoverable ſtroak, which in an ordinary way none could ſee a comfortable tgate thereof, to have a moſt effectual tendency to the urches greateſt advantage.

9. We have ſeen theſe marvellous providences, which ve followed the *Church* there in ſuch remarkeably ſad and d trying times, that when it look't as a winter ſeaſon, en ſhould the ſpring break up, and the wilderneſs bloſ- me, by ſo great an increaſe to the Church, beyond all t had formerly been ſeen, when outward things did

moſt ſmile: A people formed for the Lord, and made willing in the day of his power to follow him, in theſe parts, when but a few years before, and whilſt no viſible diſtreſs did then ly in the way, a few ſerious Chriſtians would have been a ſigne and a wonder to all about them. Yea how thus the Church hath been fed under the rod, and the Scattering of the Miniſters of Chriſt through the land by the violence of theſe times, to have tended more for the ſpreading of the Goſpel, than could ever in an ordinary way have been looked for in their former ſtate. Oh! are our eyes ſhut, that as not to ſee this marvellous work of the Lord, which he hath brought about in theſe times, which without a ſtrange inadvertance may be ſeen to be the immediate finger of God, and ſomething above all ſecond cauſes, how ſuch a death-like wound ſhould make way for ſo bleſſed and effectual a healing, yea which may be a comforting preſage of ſome excellent building yet of his houſe there, by ſuch a preparing of materials for the ſame?

10. Thus hath the Lord appeared there in this time, by cauſe a ſuffering lot be the firſt meane to enter and fixe ſo moſt remarkeably in his way, and for a ſerious owning of truth, than which nothing upon any ordinary grounds raiſe could have been leſs hoped: and thus their hearts gained and pulled in by that meane, whereon ſo many have ſtumbled and broke, that ſurely it may be ſeen, this muſt be immediate touch of his power, before which there is ſtanding. Were it expedient, I could give in ſome ſpecial Inſtances to witneſs this, and I hope there be not a few ſuch, who can date their firſt acquaintance with the truth of the Goſpel, not only from a ſuffering time ſo univerſal upon the Church, but a peculiar caſt thereof in their own perſonal caſe, and in ſuch a marvellous way, how Jeſus Chriſt did thus endeare and commend himſelf to their ſoul.

11. That he hath graciouſly taken ſome ſervice off the peoples hand under much viſible weakneſs, and when

had but *a little ſtrength to keep by his word, and not to deny his name*, yea to contend and wreſtle againſt ſo ſtrong a tide of oppoſition to the truth, is a gain to be reckoned upon, unexpreſſibly beyond all the loſs & ſufferings of the time, for thus hath a rent been payed in to the praiſe and glory of the Churches Head, and more honourable teſtimony, which could not in that manner have been acceſſible in the greateſt outward calme of a proſperous ſtate.

12. How remarkeably hath the Lord prevented the ſcandal of the Croſs, as to many in this time, with that ſurpriſing outcome of encouragement and reſolution in ſome to adventure for the Lord, and embark with his ſuffering intereſts, where leaſt could have been expected: Yea in ſuch, where an eager purſute, and gripping after the world, would have been moſt feared, from what was their natural diſpoſition, to commend that marvellous conquering power of grace, before which there is no poſſible ſtanding, that can make it then eaſy for men to part with their right eye, or their right hand. And hath it not been aſtoniſhing, how far many have been found above themſelves. or what in an ordinary way could have been looked for in their appearance for the truth, and confeſſion before men, when they were of the Lord called forth hereunto.

13. That in this ſtrange trial, which hath occaſioned ſuch great thoughts of heart hitherto, and whilſt the Adverſaries ſtrength lay there, that they were the rod of God in his hand for his Churches humbling, *yet hath he not ſtirred up all his anger, but hath ſtayed his rough wind in the day of his eaſt wind*, and hath ſtill been a *Sanctuary* and hiding place to his ſcattered people, how in ſuch a ſtrange circuite of providence, he loſeth no time in bringing forth his worke, but every new ſtep there of with ſuch obſerveable advantage in the fitteſt ſeaſon; and by withdrawing viſible encouragements hath thus the more endeared his peoples mercies, by his own immediate appearance, and ſome ſurpriſing relief, *when he ſaw their power was gone, & that there was none ſhut up or left.*

14. These remarkeable providences, which have attended the Godly, and so many suffering and desolate families for the truth there, amidst such manifold outward straits and difficulties, as a witness, I must here give in for the Lord, and in behalf of his truth, before this generation; and I doubt not shall be yet matter of a sweet after reckoning, how such were carried through in a way, so contrary to their thought and surprising, as hath caused them after, with greatest astonishment reflect thereupon, and how *they thirsted not when he led them through the desart &c. Isai.* 48: 21.

15. This also may be obvious, what an actual discovery this strange persecution from *Prelacy* hath made, for bringing forth to the light, as a preventing mercy to the Church such, whose trading more close under ground might have tended more to obstruct the interest of the Gospel, than now, when the Cover is taken off, and how thus the Lord hath led them forth with the workers of iniquity.

16. I shall but add, which I am sure that the Adversaries of the truth there must see, and be enforced to confess, if they would give their own Conscience a hearing. How in both their Counsels and actings, and all these essayes they have had to bear down the *Church of Scotland*, *a divine hand hath visibly appeared to withstand them therein, and to ensnaring them in the work of their own hand*; yea, have been thus often determined, but by an unseen power over them to fall on that way, than which nothing could have given their interest a greater dash (and as though intentionally they had moved) for the Churches good. O that such would but so far open their eyes; yea let the nation about consider the work of God herein, what hath been the product of all the Counsels, statuts, Acts and most vigorous essayes in the execution thereof, to beat down the truth, and for wreathing the yoke of *Prelacy* on the *Church* there, but to commend the *Government* of Christ according to his own institution more universally to the

Nation

Nation, to promote *Non-conformity*, with the furthest abhorrence (even by all ranks) of this *Prelatick* interest, so as it is demonstrably evident, besides these saving effects of the power of the Gospel, they are six fold more this day in number, to whom that way is made distastful and grievous, than was *sixteen years* past. Thus hath the truth prevailed, and been found stronger than they who would oppose themselves thereto. And for all that is come, are we not enforced to see, that the Lord hath not forsaken his Church there, but her *gleanings*, (I doubt not to say,) are yet preferable to the *vintage* of many others. O that men would give glory to the Lord and cease to follow such a war in contending with him, whom they have now taken to be their party: but if not, fall they must, and be broken by his hand, *who cutteth off the Spirits of Princes, and is terrible to the Kings of the Earth.*

Chap. VIII.

WHilst we see in the blessed disposal of the Lord that different lot he assignes to particular Churches, as well as persons, and that it is not then worst, when such exercising and sharp trials do most abound, there seems some further cause of enquiry to press us at this day, upon the present state of the Reformed Churches, as it is most discerneably manifest, and what so visible a hazard and ruine (which without some marvellous appearance of the Lord is like to fall under our hand in our age) doth now pressingly call for as duty.

Sect. 1. FOr the first, This sad view, (though not without some greatest assurances from the word, to be ground of hope) anent the state of the Church, I shall in a few words offer. 1. That now is the

time, when judgment seemes to be begun at the house of God, and most remarkeably marks at the green tree; when his Church is now called to drink first of that cup of Chastisement & trial, before the dregs be wrung out to the Adversary: a time beyond what our Fathers have known, when the hand of the Lord is in a very immediate way heavy and sore upon his people, and his dispensations many wayes corrective and judicial, more than comforting.

2. That it cannot be hid, how unanswerable our groaning, or any suteable weight of this seems to be to such a stroake we are under, so that some sharp feaver may be looked for, to prevent so visible a Lethargy: whilst most seeme to be prest more anent their personal ease and satisfaction under the rod, than to answer its designe; to crouch under the burden more, than a being exercised anent the present duty of the time; Oh! may not this be a seen cause, why our own things presseth us so sore, that the care of the Church & Kingdome of Christ, is this day become so light a burden?

3. We may now see such a remarkeable *Crisis* & struggling in the present state of the Reformed Churches, as of a woman in travel, in extreme between life and death, when all things seeme to have this voice, *be in pain, and labour to bring forth O daughter of Zion*, and if some great assurances from the word of truth were not to rest on, Oh! what could be under our sight, which is not matter of grief and fear?

4. And is it not obvious, how all grounds, which in an ordinary way, have beene most hopful and promising of the Churches encouragement, have in a strange manner been broke and disappeared? And that gourd of the shadow and friendship of Princes and great men so remarkeably withered and gone, that we may know the Churches interest and thriving, leanes on no humane Prop, nor her hope at this day, *either by might, or by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord*: But O here is enough for all, and I doubt not that in his blessed way, he shall yet serve himself of such means for the great service of this time, as that

the

the leſs promiſing they are, the more convincing witneſs ſhall be thus of his being God, *who by things that are not, can confound the things that are, that no flesh may glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth, may glory in the Lord.*

5. Is there not at this day a moſt diſcerneable ſound and cry of judgment to be neere, if we knew in earneſt how to bring the written word & theſe times more neere to other; for it muſt follow what, *Amos* shewed *Chap.* 3: 8. *The Lord hath ſpoken, who can but Propheſy.* Oh! if we were but ſuch a length to be under ſome dread and aw of theſe abounding ſpiritual plagues in this time, and what followes thereupon, *Iſai.* 6: 11. *Vntill the Cities be without Inhabitant, and the houſes without man, and the land utterly deſolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and a great forſaking be of the land, but yet in it ſhall be a tenth, &c.* which ſad heavy words I muſt ſay, had not a more affrighting aſpect upon that people then waſted under ſpiritual judgments, than (they ſeem to have on the viſible Church of Chriſt at this day: though a bleſſed recovery, (how sharp ſoever the cure may be) we muſt not bring under debate.

6. That at this day there is ſuch abounding *Atheiſme* as lyes in the boſome of a profeſt aſſent to the truth, is too viſible for bringing it under debate, and one of the ſaddeſt plagues, which hath almoſt overgone the Reformed Church; yea, which is the more dreadful, as it ſeems no leſs to be kept hid by moſt from themſelves, than it is from others: but Oh! muſt we not give this ſuch a name as *Atheiſme*, where theſe evidences hereof are ſo clear. 1. How eaſily many are more ſatisfied anent the great concernes of Religion, to take them upon report, without any further enquiry, than they would be in the moſt common intereſt of their life. 2. How men are thus heſitant and unſure anent an after and eternal ſtate, whilſt they know no poſſible way, from being ſecured from this feare, which is of all undeniably the greateſt, that an eternity of woe may be before them. I confeſs, ſome way it is not ſtrange, if many queſtion,

queſtion, if there be ſuch a thing as the power and truth of Religion, and theſe marvellous experiences the Saints have hereof, becauſe ſo few know what this means, for if the generality of the world were blind, and knew not what a thing ſeeing is, it might probably cauſe them doubt if there were any ſuch thing as light and colours, that others did ſee, or if there were in truth ſuch a thing as ſight is; but Oh! how amazing is it, when the great things of God do with ſuch ſeriouſneſs offer themſelves to trial, and calles us with the furtheſt certainty of ſeeing, and not by report to know the ſame: How moſt yet lives wholly ſtrangers there-to? 3. And is not rare ſuch an exerciſe this day, as any ſerious reflection on thoſe truths, and import thereof, to which men finds ſo eaſy to give an aſſent, or to bring this once neer their thoughts, that as Religion and the power thereof cannot poſſibly be known but by experience, there is ſuch a demonſtration of it to be aſſuredly had, as that of a living man, whereby he knowes that he lives and breaths. Oh! at what a rate do now moſt profeſſed Chriſtians enjoy their peace and quiet, when the acceptable hour and ſeaſon of making ſure for another world is haſtening ſo faſt, without being once concerned to have ſerious godlineſs a perſonal buſineſs, and to know it on ſome aſſurance on their ſoul, who yet knowes that to die, and paſs that great ſtep out of time into eternity, muſt ere long be their perſonal work, though men can but once die without all poſſible reacting of it again for ever. 4. Though there ſeemed never more cauſe for ſuch a ſad remarke than now, which was in former times in the Church, that either the Scripture muſt not be the Word of God, or moſt then were not Chriſtians, who profeſſ'd themſelves ſuch: yet how few can be ſeen, to be ſuch a length in this day, as to bring themſelves and their way into the Scripture, and before its judgment: But Oh! in a deplorable and deſperate kind of peace, does keep at a diſtance with ſuch clear & enforcing diſcoveries of the truth, who do not profeſſedly oppoſe the ſame.

7. It

7. It may by too manifeſt this day, how much it is become a matter of wit and invention to be Chriſtians rather than of power and life, and to act handſomely ſuch a part, as it were by rules of art, than a ſerious following of the truth in the ſimplicity thereof. This being now a time, when the *Theory* and *Notion* of practical Divinity hath been too much enlarged, and this in ſo different a mould and shape, as hath too viſibly tended for its darkning, and to render it more perplex and thorny, whence. 1. It may be ſeen, how ſuch a length in the Notion and forme of knowledge as ſwimes moſt in the judgment hath almoſt taken up the roome in the applicatory part thereof, to have light brought neer and home to the ſoul by a perſonal application, as though the great intereſt of Religion were not more to live the truths thereof, than to know them. Oh! how ſad a ſnare is this like to be for helping many to *Perish* with the more quiet and ſecurity, the more they are inured in ſuch an ordinary converſe with the Theory of godlineſs. 2. And may we not thus ſee a practical feeding and living on the known and greateſt truths, which have a communication with the very vitals of Religion, ſuch as the Doctrine of Redemption, Adoption, Juſtification, and effectual calling, &c. is ſo rarely known this day in the Church. 3. How little alſo is this work of a Chriſtian followed about their affections, ſo as to be kept vigorous and warme in the matter of duty, which ſo much influenceth that dead and uncomfortable walk, and driving heavily in the wayes of the Lord by a great part who are Profeſſors in this time.

8. I ſhall but further add upon ſo ſad a ſubject, how viſibly almoſt every where is that great intereſt of the life and power of Religion through moſt of the Reformed Churches ſpent and worne out, with that ancient love and tenderneſs in following the Lord, which was once in the firſt times of the Reformation diſcerneable, which ſeems now to have no proportion to that meaſure of light and knowledge we are under. Oh! whither is this gone even in thoſe

parts

parts, where sometimes the word of the Gospel did with such burning and shining light goe forth, so as the very sight and remembrance of such times is like to weare out.

Chap. IX.

HAving given this short touch of some sad appearances of this times, and what seems most discerneable in the present state of the Church, when (whatever in any age) that *call* to the Church of *Ephesus Rev.* 2: 5. does now speak with greatest weight to the Reformed Churches, *to Remember from whence they are fallen, and do their first works; lest the Lord come, and remove the Candlestick.* And so sad a declining from the ancient power and life of Religion, which once was, may have the *forme* also taken away. And since this is a matter not only of a publick concerne for the life and being of the Church; but what should ly so neer to every one, with respect to their eternal state; yea, that its undeniable, where the present hazard & ruine of the Churches is now most discerneable, there must a healing & recovery also be sought. I shall but in a few *particulars* speak to something of a present and pressing *duty*, which through the Lords gracious concurrence, should be of singular use, to promote this great interest of the *power of Religion.*

Sect. 1. THat this day, Christians work in the duties and exercises of godliness, and the Doctrine of the Church there anent, did lead more in, with some serious tendency to the *Gospel, and to Jesus Christ* there, as the alone *Center*, whither the whole of truth and godliness must meet. Oh! how sad and astonishing is this? And I must say one of the most influencing visible causes of such

ſuch an ebb and conſumption, as is now ſo univerſal in he vital parts of Chriſtianity, that this great ſtudy of pra-ſtical Religion, which is not conceiveable, but as it is *Evangelick*, does not more cloſely keep betwixt theſe; a noving unto Jeſus Chriſt our bleſſed head, as the laſt nd, and alone patterne, to which it muſt be conformed, nd its being derived from him, as its alone fountain: Yea when ſo great a trade is about Religion in the Church, yet how little thoſe ſeems to be known or ly eer in the practice of moſt. 1. That the Chriſtians ſtock not in his own hand: but all the diſburſements and out-vings to each of theſe muſt come through his moſt bleſ-d hand, *in whom it pleaſed the Father that all fulneſs ſhould well, and from whom we muſt receive grace for grace.* Oh! ould it be ſtrange, though theſe gracious influences of ght and life, are ſo much withheld in theſe times, as that meaſure which hath been formerly known there-, when ſo many are upon another ſcent, than this eſſed and ſtraight way of the Goſpel in rolling the ſtreſs their work and duties upon Jeſus Chriſt by a continued de, and uſe making of him as our *Sanctification*, and improve his kingly power for that end. 2. That it is t more preſſing upon us to have that bleſſed ſacrifice of *riſt our Paſſover* once offered for ſin, to be continued as *rengthning feaſt*, to live and feed upon 1 Cor. 5: 8. As are there called *to keep the feaſt*, and thus know, what s to have the *blood of atonement* by a clear warming and d ſenſible application thereof, laid as the alone healing ve, to a wounded Spirit. 3. To have the whole of Chriſtians trials and exerciſes thus airthed and brought the Goſpel, as the ſure and alone way of their ſtrength, t ſhould let them know in another manner their joy ak up, when under *neceſſity*, *diſtreſs*, *reproach*, and *weakneſs* in ourſeves, that the *power of Chriſt might reſt n them*, 2 Cor. 12. 4. To know more by practical nt, not only theſe ineſtimable fruits and bleſſings of Redemp-

Redemption by Christ; but what it is to have our love and delight carried forth towards his *glorious person*, and for embracing thus of himself, as altogether lovely. O this is the alone object, which beyond holiness, and all the promised advantages of his death and purchass, we should move most towards, to know an *union* with his *person*, and taking up our alone rest there in himself where the Christians choice and consent, with the fullest complacence and delight, in so inestimably great an offer, should terminat in him, as their exceeding joy. O blessed, and unexpressably sweet truth, (were this more known by practical light in the power and efficacy thereof) that the Christians claime and intereſt to the unsearcheable richeſs of Christ, and all the blessings of the Gospel does thus follow a marriage union & propriety in his *person*, and our being *betrothed* indissolubly, in the neereſt tye, and by an irrevocable consent unto Jesus Christ, as he stands to us in all his offices, and upon his Own tearmes, what might be then hoped of another lustre and appearance upon Professors of the truth in this age, and that some should not find it so easy to offer a thrust in such a manner to darken the Doctrine of grace, and give the world such a scheme aud mould of the Gospel, as they do at this day. And it is sure, a more serious looking in upon this great mystery, should enforce some conviction with it, that its another thing to be a Christian than many Professors now takes it to be: I have known some who had been a remarkeable length beyond others in following of duties, and in light there anent; yea to the conviction of all that knew them, were in this judged true only serious in their way; who after by the gracious work of the Lord, were made to see the truth of *conversion* to be another thing, which they had been wholly strange to, even when such a length in Christian duties, and once this marvellous light by the Gospel shined in upon them, and therewith knew what it was to have the

he

art pulled in to Jesus Christ, by such a blessed drawing uch of his power, as did determine their closing with m in his way, and upon his own tearmes.

ECT. 2. IT seemes a pressing *Call* to many in these times, who own a profession of the Truth, ith such a doubtful and fluctuating assent thereto, what e may see *Rev.* 3: *vers.* 15. that they would be in earnest, d exerce reason there anent, as to know their state, & w it is with them upon these great concernes of an im- ortal soul; so as either to quite an empty shew of godli- ss, or follow this in the *power and truth* thereof, since is not conceiveable upon cleerest grounds, what ssible hesitation should be betwixt these, *that if the rd be God*, and the Scripture revealed in the Old & New stament, his undoubted word and Counsel, by which e alone way of being eternally saved, is revealed unto en: It is then sure, that this must be their greatest inte- st to follow him, & own his truth with all *their heart*, & *h all their strength*; but if not, & that they are not persuad- upon their soul hereof; there must needs be a being possi- e, and determined here, without the furthest contra- ction to reason. Now for enforceing some conviction reof, if through the blessing of the Lord this might have ight on the Conscience of any, I shall offer these to considered. 1. That it is a thing so unanswerable, why en be not either seriously godly, or real *Atheists*, either quire duty, or what herein *their hand findeth*, *to do it th all their might*, since it is upon no less than an eter- l interest, and the season now so quickly hasteneth away r any possible access to such a trial. 2. What if upon e very supposal and report hereof, that this account ven by the whole race of the Saints since the begin- ng, of these marvellous things of Religion, in the power d reality thereof, be assuredly true: and this blessed

way, which they ſee others to be ſerious in, be the alone way to a bleſſedneſs for ever, then in what a dreadful caſe are they, or can they think to meet with ſuch, and enjoy one ſtate together in another world, whoſe way and principles have been in ſuch a real oppoſition to others ſtated here. Oh! what an aſtonishing peace is this which moſt at this day entertain, when it is under ſome ſhew and profeſſion to be Chriſtians? 3. How is it poſſible, to ſhut their eyes at theſe enforcing evidences of the power and life of Religion, to be an undoubted certainty, and known unto others by experience, though they were never acquainted therewith themſelves; when it is ſure they muſt ſee in the life and practice of ſuch ſome viſible tranſcript of what is alſo ſo expreſly witneſſed in the Scripture thereof, nor can they debate ſuch to be highly rational, as much as any in other things; yea to juſtify them in their Conſcience of being ſerious in what they own? & muſt it not be ſome other ſight theſe have here anent, that they yet have ever underſtood? 4. It ſeemes a ſtrange contradiction to reaſon, if they would but once reflect upon this, what ground of prejudice and caſting of reproach on that way is there, which they never yet knew upon trial, whilſt they ſee this doth not flie the light, or their exacteſt ſearch and enquiry; but that the cauſe moſt viſibly is an imbred enmity & averſion at the power and truth of godlineſs, for which they yet know not how to give a reaſon. 5. How they come ſuch a length in the forme and external duties of godlineſs, when they ſuffer ſo much hereby, as a ſad and bitter yoke to the flesh, and know no ſolide gain and income this way; whilſt duty in the power & ſpiritual exerciſe thereof is ſo ſweet & eaſy, yea ſuch unexpreſſible delights found, when it is ſeriouſly followed. Oh what a ſore part is religiō in the practice, if it be not on mens heart? Or what comfort is there to come ſo neer in a being almoſt Chriſtians, and yet perish in the cloſe? to hazard

ſome

some little, but with such a reserve, as yet to adventure all for Jesus Christ, if they should be called thereto, and upon each hand be so sad Losers? 6. To admit the truth and Authority of the Scripture with so visible a latitude, as is by many this day owned in their way, may seeme indeed strange, and what a laxe conception and mould of Religon these frame to themselves, as tends to lay aside that feare, tenderness, and serious work in the things of God, which the word so pressingly enforceth, as if mens real interest thus, were how to *Perish* without fear and dread. 7. It is a strange length most in these times come, in a concurrence with others in the publick duties of Religion, when they know so little any pressure upon their Spirit, what should be their work alone, in the retired duties of a Christian, which are unquestionably the most substantial and weighty part of duty, and can Religion be there in truth, (what ever name these have to live) where its more secret work under the ground keeps no proportion to that which is publick in the view of others. 8. That now, when there is so much discerneably to imbitter the world to them, and their outward comforts do so rarely answere to the sore labour, toile and griefs, which are here. Oh! how is it, so few are found on this blessed scent and enquiry, to know the power and truth of godliness, and what a sure & unexpressible relief is there for every state & condition; in delighting their soul in God, & a neer & feeling converse with the great truths of the Gospel, which are to most, known but by report only: so as they might once know upon trial what thus it is to have the desires of their hearts answered.

Sect. 3. SInce this is of greateſt weight, and that it is ſure, the alone frame and mould of practical Religion is with ſuch expreſs plainneſs shewed us in the Scripture, as none needs be in the dark, without shutting their eyes; yea I muſt ſay, if theſe *ſignes* and *characters* given of the reality of godlineſs were ſeriouſly pondered, there was never an age, wherein more Profeſſors are like to come short of heaven, and be found in a dreadful deluſion anent their ſtate than now; and ſo much the more affrighting, as ſo little acceſs ſeemes this day for many's being convinced, through that length they have come in a forme; nor the truth whereof is ſo great a myſtery: ~~Yea~~ never was a time of ſuch light, when the thoughts of theſe great truths of *heaven* and *hell*, and for being eternally ſaved, ſeemes to have had ſo little weight on mens ſoule. Oh! that ſerious work and exerciſe, which was ſo known in former times of the Church, *for working out their Salvation with fear and trembling*, ſeemes almoſt gone in a throng of other things. It is true, there are remarkeably different *ſizes* and degrees among the Saints, and the infancy of ſome as well as the further age of others muſt be conſidered: But ſince it is like a peculiar ſtroake upon moſt, that they will not once come neer to the light, & be tried by that infallible rule I judge it duty, *whether they will heare, or forbeare*, to offer *ſome Scripture truths that lyes ſo neer to the very ſtate and being of a Chriſtian*; that if ever I knew any thing of the way of the Lord I muſt profeſs, I know not, how any can be ſtrangers thereto, and to ſome neer and feeling converſe therewith in experience, without being ſtrangers to the very *eſſentials* of Chriſtianity, or can have any comfortable evidence, that they ſhall live that life of glory, who have not thus known by practical light, what it is to live the life of grace here.

1. That ſuch as have paſſed the new birth, muſt know a ſpiritual and new life, with which they were not borne & is from no natural cauſes, but formed and wrought within by the Spirit, whereof there is as certain and undeniable a de-

a demonſtration, as they are ſure that they breath, and have a natural life, a life that hath its peculiar operation and vital acts put forth in its breathings, delights and deſires, in a neer converſe with the Lord, as truely, as any acts of this natural life; with theſe ſenſible languishings and over cloudings thereof, as well as enjoyments and pleaſures, proper to its own nature, as the influences and breathings of the Spirit of the Lord are let forth, or reſtrained. It is ſure, nothing can be more expreſly shewed, than this from the whole of the Scripture, and how it followes on an union with *Jeſus Chriſt*, *in whom it is hid*, *Col.* 3: 3. *and a living in him Gal.* 2: 20. *to dwell in him Eph.* 3: 17. *to be quickned in him* Eph. 2: 5. *yea to be nourished and increaſed in him*, *Col.* 2: 19. and is not this a ſerious buſineſs for trial, what is the ſeal to the truth thereof from experience?

2. That a ſpiritual evidence and diſcovery of divine truth, which differs not in degree, but in kind is now known to them, as is clear, 1 *Cor.* 2: 14. whence the truths of the word are ſometimes ſet home on the ſoul with that light & power, which is unexpreſſible to others; & though in the aknowing the ſame truths, yet in another manner than before; when by the *Spirit they know the things that are freely given us of God*, which no report could ever have made them believe, until by grace they were taken out of that dreadful gulf of the darkneſs of nature, unto that marvellous light revealed in the Goſpel, which then cauſed ſuch a change betwixt them and what they once were.

3. That *the peace of God, which paſſeth natural underſtanding, & perſerves the heart and mind through Chriſt Jeſus*, is not to be kept without a continued warre and wreſtling, and that as they have two parties within ſtated in moſt vigorous oppoſition to other; ſo the more ſpiritual duty is, and the more cloſly the Law is preſſed in its ſpiritual extent, the further averſion hath the carnal heart thereto, which is not more clearly shewed *Rom.* 7: 22, 23. than their experience can witneſs.

4. That

4. That this truth of the Kingdome of Jesus Christ is to be known on the soul, as well as his visible Kingdome over the Church; which consisteth *in righteousnesse, peace and joy in the holy Ghost*, *Rom.* 14: 17. but such as cannot possibly be known or understood, but by a practical and feeling light thereof: *And in his working all our works in us*; whence such sensible liberty at one time more than another, and confidence in our approach to God after saddest bondage and fear, so sweet a calme, and sunshine, when the storme is most sharp without, and a being carried through these difficulties with such advantage, which at another time & in another frame, they would have fainted at.

5. That a new acquaintance, & some other society, than that of men; and a real fellowship and converse with God both in secret & more publick duties is assuredly true so as they have been never less alone, with more solide refreshment, than thus alone, in the retirements of a Christian now: as the whole of the Scripture bears such a witness hereto, as there needs no clearing thereof. O what a testimony have the Saints also to give? and where this is taken upon report, can it be, that Religion hath ever been a matter of power and reality to such? I thought it a choice word from a grave and exercised Christian in the wayes of God, that being frequently and much alone in the exercise of prayer to some that thought strange thereat, said *he could not part with his duty, until he found the Lord, and when he found him it was so sweet, as made it not easy to goe forth to the world.* Yea that also of another famous Christian of our Nation, who had so oft known an immediate strength and support under greatest pressures sealed in this way of retired fellowship with God; *with him the most of mosts is less than nothing, but without him I find the least of leasts to be more than I can burden.*

6. It is surely conjoined with the being and state of a Christian, to know in experience, a power with the wor-

word and ordinances of the Goſpel, above the moſt perſwaſive words of man, or any moral influence; yea with that different manifeſtation, both as to light and power at one time, as they can no more have at their choice at other times, than to have the Sun ſhine upon the earth, when under a dark cloud: & thus muſt know ſomething of that *Luke* 24. *the burning of their heart within when the Scripture hath been opened, that the Kingdome of God is not in word, but in power*, 1 *Cor.* 4: 20. *yea what an evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit is with the Goſpel*, 1 *Cor.* 2: 6.

7. That ſuch great things are undoubted realities, as the ſeal and earneſt of the Spirit of promiſe; the comforts of the holy Ghoſt, *Epheſ.* 1: *verſ.* 13. which in ſome meaſure muſt be known here to each of the Saints; the ſenſible intimation of pardon on their ſoul, after contrition and brokenneſs of heart; that voice of joy and gladneſs, than which no audible voice was ever more certainly known, than this hath been on their ſoul; the immediate preſence of the Comforter, and truths brought in ſo ſeaſonably in a day and hour of ſtrait, as hath brought unexpreſſible eaſe and refreshment therewith.

8. It is ſure, this truth alſo lyes ſo neer the ſtate and being of a Chriſtian, as there muſt be ſome practical knowledge of it, who ever knew the work of God on their own ſoul, that there is acceſs and liberty for powring out the heart in prayer, and a being determined to approach unto the Lord with a ſenſible power from himſelf; the felt taſte of his acceptation of them in their ſute, and being admitted to ſee his face with joy; yea is thus made as diſcerneable, as it is enſured, *Phil.* 4: 5. *Pſ.* 91: 15. as on the other hand; upon ſome wearing out and reſtraint in this bleſſed exerciſe, the ſenſible abatement of that ſpiritual life, and vigour they formerly knew in the wayes of God; ſo as to find theſe duties both burdenſome and diſrelishing, in which they formerly have known ſuch delight, and how that truth, *Matth.* 26: *verſ.* 41.

doth then enforce a witnes thereto, that *Watching* and *Prayer* is the tried mean to keep any from falling into temptation.

9. That as there are unexpreſſible delights in holineſs, yea ſuch a reality as *the joy and peace in believing*, which they certainly know; ſo alſo a diſcerneable quenching of the Spirit by adventuring on any known ſin; and when they would not read their boſome diſtempers from the word, they have been enforced oft to look in again upon them by ſome ſharp and viſible check from the Lord, and know the truth of that 1 *Theſ.* 5:19. *Pſ.* 81: 11, 12.

10. That ſenſible influences of ſtrength from the Lord, & his gracious concurrence, which waits on commanded duty aſſuredly are, not only as to the frame of their Spirits, but as to the exerciſe of their gifts, & how without him, who is our ſtrength we can do nothing; I ſhould think it a ſtrange thing how a Chriſtian can be in earneſt with his work, and a ſtranger to this.

11. Laſtly, That it is ſure, the *fruit of righteouſneſs is ſowen in peace*, and how at no time doth tenderneſs and ſtraightneſs in mens walk want ſome inward taſte and ſenſe of its acceptation with the Lord: When it is no leſs diſcerneable, ſuch a withdrawing thereof upon ſome wrong ſtep and turning aſide in his way, as diſcouragement and darkneſs doth ſenſiblie meet then, to let them know that it is ſurely *a bitter and evil thing to depart from the Lord.*

SECT. 4. THis duty in theſe ſad and winnowing times we are fallen in, ſhould ly neer us, with reſpect to the publick intereſt of the Church, as well as to our own perſonal caſe, to guard againſt prejudices at the way of the Lord, which on theſe grounds I would preſs.

1. That ſuch a remarkeable *woe*, is denounced in the Scripture, not only againſt thoſe by *whom offences come*, but to *the world becauſe of offences*, this being one of the ſaddeſt

ſtroak

ſtroaks from the Lord, when a diſpoſition and tendency to ſtumble, hath judicially a ſtumbling block laid in their way. 2. As under that predominant humour of the jaundice, the colour is ſuteably repreſented to the eye; it is ſtrange to think what a judgment an evil eye doth paſs on the ſpotleſs wayes of the Lord, yea with what ſatisfaction an impoiſoned nature doth ſeek to ſtrengthen it ſelf. 3. It is ſure, the truth ſuffers not more from open oppoſition, than oft it does by theſe hid reflections, and ſubtil conveyances of reproach from many in theſe times. 4. It hath not been known ſince that bleſſed Reformation of the Church from Popery, that where in any of the Churches the Lord hath had ſome ſpecial work on foot, and the intereſt of the Goſpel gaining ground, but Sathan there hath followed the ſame remarkeably with ſome ſuch cloſs and ſubtil aſſault in bringing forth ſomething of his work in reſemblance thereto, to beget prejudice againſt the way of truth. It was unqueſtionably one of the moſt ſearching trials the *German Church* had, by that ſtrange appearance of the *Anabaptiſts* there. But this being ſo noture and publick in the hiſtories of theſe late times, beſides other remarkeable inſtances of the like kind, I forbear to mention it further. One memorable paſſage, that is leſs known to many, may be for ſome advantage and confirming to the truth, the inſerting of it here. When the Goſpel was flourishing in the Church of *Ireland* by the Miniſtery of ſome eminent Servants of Chriſt, who were labouring there ſome years before the Rebellion, and a moſt extraordinary time of the power of the Spirit following the ordinances; when others of Satans devices to caſt a let in the way, had proved abortive, this great Deſtroyer was at laſt let looſe in a ſtrange manner, to eſſay a Counterfeit of the work of the Lord there, which was then ſo effectual to the converſion of many. This firſt began about *Lochlearne* upon ſeveral ignorant perſons, who in the midſt of the publick worship fell a breathing and panting, as theſe

who

who had run long, with ſtrange pangs like convulſions; yea thus were affected, what ever purpoſe was preached, even by ſuch Miniſters who were known enemies to the truth, the number of which ſtill increaſed through ſeveral parishes for a time. At firſt, both Miniſters and Chriſtians there were put to a ſtand, but after upon further diſcovery of the tendency of their way, and found no ſolide convincing work, which had therewith any ſenſe of ſin, or panting after a Saviour, did quickly perceive this to be one of the depths of Satan, and his deſigne to ſlander and diſgrace the work of the Lord, ſo as after, ſome grave Miniſters who were then there, when they began in that manner to appeare in publick, did with great Authority rebuke that lying Spirit in their Maſters name; yea it was evident, how after ſuch did continue rude, profane and ignorant. Through this engine did the Devil thus drive to beget prejudices amongſt thoſe, who did but look on at a diſtance; againſt the power and life of Religion.

Sect. 5. What a bleſſed & effectual mean should this be to promote ſeriouſneſs, & againſt ſuch ſad & ſpreading formality of theſe times, the Churches are ſo much now waſted under; *to have more deep & frequent thoughts on that great ſubject of death*, about which there is no debate amongſt us, yet it is ſtrange to conſider in what a manner it's kept at a diſtance with moſt of the generation. O what an enforcement should this bring with it, to follow godlineſs, not in a forme, but in the power and truth thereof, if ſuch who have profited ſo little under the Ordinances of Goſpel, would but ſit ſometimes alone, and heare this *grave Preacher* ſpeak to them, and bring theſe things neer to their thoughts. 1. That ſtrange way, and paſſage they are aſſuredly to goe through, which was never known to them before, but muſt once paſs it, betwixt time and eternity; and what this will be, when they are entering on that dark & unknown ground; *whilſt the keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble*,

and these that look out at the window are darkned, because man goeth to his long home. This is a grave & serious work, if men could find such time, amidst the throng of other things, to advise, how they adventure, and on what tearmes into another world. 2. How neer this great change is, without a possibility to have one hour ensured beyond the present hour of our life, so as each night we ly down, not knowing but our breath may be stopt with some sudden arrest of death before the morning, which might put us oft to think, without a strange and desperat security; *how would death now meet us at this hour?* I thought it a great word of a choice and serious Christian a few years a goe, when he was called to suffer for the truth, and was sentenced to die; said before his judges, *I bless the Lord, that these seven years past, death could not have come wrong to me, not one day.* 3. What serious thoughts should this cause, in one moment to admit so great a change, and in the very instant of the Souls parting with the body, a present entering into that after state, which shall put the Christian once and for ever, yea in one moment in the fulness of unconceiveable joy, in the immediat embracements of Jesus Christ, the society of the Blessed Angels, and Church triumphant, & what a sight shall that be, which no thoughts or words can possibly reach, when with the shutting of these eyes here, they are then opened in the Paradise of God, & know the state which is there, *and what is the inheritance of the Saints in Light.* 4. What a change this must be to such, who in one moment shall part with their heaven, and find a real hell; *for the men of this world, whose portion is here,* to be pulled from all the delights and pleasures they once had, to take up their lodging in these dark and horride prisons, which are in the pit, and then know this to be sad earnest, of which they made so small account, while they were upon earth. Oh! will nothing bring neer the Doctrine of Hell, and eternal damnation to most of this generation, until they know it upon trial, when these gates shall be everlastingly

shut

shut never to admit an opening. 5 To Consider what thoughts and reflection must men in eternity have of their former state and condition. And what will the remembrance of a life time here in the fulness of outward comforts, amount to, which are gone, never to returne more. Yea in that hour, when the great men of this earth are turned out of all their Possessions, and their soul taken from them, by that dreadful pull of grim death, not by a rendering and commitment thereof to Jesus Christ, which his people only knowes; *then whose shall all these possessions be?* O! but that must be a heavy and sore pull for an unmortified man to die and leave the world, whilst his heart is still alive to it. 6. What another account, upon the approach of this blessed change will the Christians then have, of their most imbittering crosses, which through grace have tended both to trial and furthering of their faith and love; and some solide fruit for the Lord, beyond these, who once had the greatest delights and pleasures here, when they are past and gone? 7. Is it not neer, when many shall question, whether their life was real, or a dreame; whilst each day and hour, as it is hastening over some part of the worlds comforts, putteth by also some of the Christians Crosses and griefs; that whilst his work lyes most to make some gainful improvement thereof; he knowes also now, *this sad and searching trouble, and I shall never meet again*: though the fruit thereof, goes before, and shall meet him in that blessed state which is above. 8. To consider also that sweet and sound sleep the bodies of the Saints shall have for a time in the grave, which is the bed of their rest; yea how indissolubly there, is their dust still united with their blessed Head, and within a little, how ravishing shall their wakening be. It was a sweet thought to that excellent Servant of Christ, *Mr Rollock* when he stretcht forth his hand on his death-bed, with a serious looking thereon, and said: *Yea even this hand shall once shine in glory.* It is sure, the earth now could not be capable of the least of the

the Saints, who are entered into a glorified State, so unconceiveably great is that distance betwixt that condition where now they are, and the highest state of a Christian here in this lower world.

Sect. 6. THis weighty duty I must touch a little here, to watch and guard against that dreadful hazard and wasting plague, which hath had so visible a tendency, almost to ruine the interest of the Churches of Christ this day, of *love and eager pursute after the world*. It is remarkeable with what further light this is enforced under the *New Testament*, than under the *Old*, both as to the hazard, which followeth thereon, and that reckoning the Saints must make with the *strait and narrow way, and much tribulation to enter into glory*. Present things ly neer the senses, and have oft that force, as most will not cease to follow the baite, even when that destroying hook of the hazard of losing their immortal soul is so discerneable, yea how loath many in this age are to come neer to Scripture light hereanent: But oh it is undeniable how much this hath tended to a wearing out the power & spirituality of Religion, with that life and tenderness that did formerly appear in the Church, when to quite all for Jesus Christ, and his truth was with such joy and delight then reckoned upon in these times of persecution; yea their serious and earnest pursuing after the substance, and reality of godliness was no less discerneable, than now this eager tendency & grasping after that shadow of the world by most, who profess the Truth. But though the publick concernes of the Kingdome of Christ should not have weight with some: Yet if men cease not to exerce reason, & be under any awe & dread of the Scripture, yea have not concluded their hope in this life only; this *Subject*, I am sure, may enforce some serious thoughts to them. I confess I must say, upon any light from the Scripture, with the too manifest discovery

of

who had run long, with ſtrange pangs like convulſions: yea thus were affected, what ever purpoſe was preached, even by ſuch Miniſters who were known enemies to the truth, the number of which ſtill increaſed through ſeveral parishes for a time. At firſt, both Miniſters and Chriſtians there were put to a ſtand, but after upon further diſcovery of the tendency of their way, and found no ſolide convincing work, which had therewith any ſenſe of ſin, or panting after a Saviour, did quickly perceive this to be one of the depths of Satan, and his deſigne to ſlander and diſgrace the work of the Lord, ſo as after, ſome grave Miniſters who were then there, when they began in that manner to appeare in publick, did with great Authority rebuke that lying Spirit in their Maſters name; yea it was evident, how after ſuch did continue rude, profane and ignorant. Through this engine did the Devil thus drive to beget prejudices amongſt thoſe, who did but look on at a diſtance; againſt the power and life of Religion.

Sect. 5. What a bleſſed & effectual mean should this be to promote ſeriouſneſs, & againſt ſuch ſad & ſpreading formality of theſe times, the Churches are ſo much now wafted under; *to have more deep & frequent thoughts on the great ſubject of death*, about which there is no debate amongſt us, yet it is ſtrange to conſider in what a manner it's kept at a diſtance with moſt of the generation. O what an enforcement should this bring with it, to follow godlineſs, not in a forme, but in the power and truth thereof, if ſuch who have profited ſo little under the Ordinances of Goſpel, would but ſit ſometimes alone, and heare this *grave Preacher* ſpeak to them, and bring theſe things neer to their thoughts. 1. That ſtrange way, and paſſage they are aſſuredly to goe through, which was never known to them before, but muſt once paſs it, betwixt time and eternity; and what this will be, when they are entering on that dark & unknown ground; *whilſt the keepers of the houſe ſhall tremble*,

and

and theſe that look out at the window are darkned, becauſe man goeth to his long home. This is a grave & ſerious work, if men could find ſuch time, amidſt the throng of other things, to adviſe, how they adventure, and on what tearmes into another world. 2. How neer this great change is, without a poſſibility to have one hour enſured beyond the preſent hour of our life, ſo as each night we ly down, not knowing but our breath may be ſtopt with ſome ſudden arreſt of death before the morning, which might put us oft to think, without a ſtrange and deſperat ſecurity; *how would death now meet us at this hour?* I thought it a great word of a choice and ſerious Chriſtian a few years a goe, when he was called to ſuffer for the truth, and was ſentenced to die; ſaid before his judges, *I bleſs the Lord, that theſe ſeven years paſt, death could not have come wrong to me, not one day.* 3. What ſerious thoughts ſhould this cauſe, in one moment to admit ſo great a change, and in the very inſtant of the Souls parting with the body, a preſent entering into that after ſtate, which ſhall put the Chriſtian once and for ever, yea in one moment in the fulneſs of unconceiveable joy, in the immediat embracements of Jeſus Chriſt, the ſociety of the Bleſſed Angels, and Church triumphant, & what a ſight ſhall that be, which no thoughts or words can poſſibly reach, when with the ſhutting of theſe eyes here, they are then opened in the Paradiſe of God, & know the ſtate which is there, *and what is the inheritance of the Saints in Light.* 4. What a change this muſt be to ſuch, who in one moment ſhall part with their heaven, and find a real hell; *for the men of this world, whoſe portion is here*, to be pulled from all the delights and pleaſures they once had, to take up their lodging in theſe dark and horride priſons, which are in the pit, and then know this to be ſad earneſt, of which they made ſo ſmall account, while they were upon earth. Oh! will nothing bring neer the Doctrine of Hell, and eternal damnation to moſt of this generation, until they know it upon trial, when theſe gates ſhall be everlaſtingly

shut never to admit an opening. 5 To Conſider what thoughts and reflection muſt men in eternity have of their former ſtate and condition. And what will the remembrance of a life time here in the fulneſs of outward comforts, amount to, which are gone, never to returne more, Yea in that hour, when the great men of this earth are turned out of all their Poſſeſſions, and their ſoul taken from them, by that dreadful pull of grim death, not by a rendering and commitment thereof to Jeſus Chriſt, which his people only knowes; *then whoſe ſhall all theſe poſſeſſions be?* O! but that muſt be a heavy and ſore pull for an unmortified man to die and leave the world, whilſt his heart is ſtill alive to it. 6. What another account, upon the approach of this bleſſed change will the Chriſtians then have, of their moſt imbittering croſſes, which through grace have tended both to trial and furthering of their faith and love; and ſome ſolide fruit for the Lord, beyond theſe, who once had the greateſt delights and pleaſures here, when they are paſt and gone? 7. Is it not neer, when many ſhall queſtion, whether their life was real, or a dreame; whilſt each day and hour, as it is haſtening over ſome part of the worlds comforts, putteth by alſo ſome of the Chriſtians Croſſes and griefs; that whilſt his work lyes moſt to make ſome gainful improvement thereof; he knowes alſo now, *this ſad and ſearching trouble, and I ſhall never meet again*: though the fruit thereof, goes before, and ſhall meet him in that bleſſed ſtate which is above. 8. To conſider alſo that ſweet and ſound ſleep the bodies of the Saints ſhall have for a time in the grave, which is the bed of their reſt; yea how indiſſolubly there, is their duſt ſtill united with their bleſſed Head, and within a little, how ravishing ſhall their wakening be. It was a ſweet thought to that excellent Servant of Chriſt, *Mr Rollock* when he ſtretcht forth his hand on his death-bed, with a ſerious looking thereon, and ſaid: *Yea even this hand ſhall once ſhine in glory.* It is ſure, the earth now could not be capable of the leaſt of the

the Saints, who are entered into a glorified State, ſo unconceiveably great is that diſtance betwixt that condition where now they are, and the higheſt ſtate of a Chriſtian here in this lower world.

Sect. 6. THis weighty duty I muſt touch a little here, to watch and guard againſt that dreadful hazard and waſting plague, which hath had ſo viſible a tendency, almoſt to ruine the intereſt of the Churches of Chriſt this day, of *love and eager purſute after the world*. It is remarkeable with what further light this is enforced under the *New Teſtament*, than under the *Old*, both as to the hazard, which followeth thereon, and that reckoning the Saints muſt make with the *ſtrait and narrow way, and much tribulation to enter into glory*. Preſent things ly neer the ſenſes, and have oft that force, as moſt will not ceaſe to follow the baite, even when that deſtroying hook of the hazard of loſing their immortal ſoul is ſo diſcerneable, yea how loath many in this age are to come neer to Scripture light hereanent: But oh it is undeniable how much this hath tended to a wearing out the power & ſpirituality of Religion, with that life and tenderneſs that did formerly appear in the Church, when to quite all for Jeſus Chriſt, and his truth was with ſuch joy and delight then reckoned upon in theſe times of perſecution; yea their ſerious and earneſt purſuing after the ſubſtance, and reality of godlineſs was no leſs diſcerneable, than now this eager tendency & graſping after that ſhadow of the world by moſt, who profeſs the Truth. But though the publick concernes of the Kingdome of Chriſt ſhould not have weight with ſome: Yet if men ceaſe not to exerce reaſon, & be under any law & dread of the Scripture, yea have not concluded their hope in this life only; this *Subject*, I am ſure, may enforce ſome ſerious thoughts to them. I confeſs I muſt ſay, upon any light from the Scripture, with the too manifeſt diſcovery

of

of that eager Scent moſt ſeemes to be upon in this age; how to be rich, and have great things in the world, it hath put me to a ſtand; not but it is an unqueſtionable duty for Chriſtians in their ſeveral callings to be ſeriouſly concerned therein, *and not ſlothful in buſineſs*, and that ſuch are, and have been in all times, who have got their Spirits more dead and ſubdued to the world a midſt the greateſt enjoyments thereof, than many of a low and mean eſtate; yea, that there are, I hope, not a few, whoſe intereſts here tends to ſome further ſervice for the Lord, in conſecrating the gain thereof to him: but this is an attainment indiſſolubly linked, not with the truth & reality of grace only, but much of the power and vigorous exerciſe thereof, and needs more than ordinary watching with prayer againſt that hazard they are in: But upon the other hand, it ſeems ſtrange, that Scripture-truths ſo plain, pungent and weighty, (if men do truely believe, and credit the Teſtimony of God therein,) ſhould not cauſe more fears and tremblings of heart on moſt of the generation, yea on many, who I hope, wants not ſome ſerious reſpect to the better part, when theſe are brought neer and ſeriouſly pondered. 1. That it is ſo expreſly told us by the Lord, *Matth.* 19: 23, 24. *Verily, I ſay unto you, that a rich man ſhall hardly enter into the Kingdom of heaven; and again, I ſay unto you, that it is eaſier for a Camel to goe through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdome of God.* And the very ſame ſet down by the *Evangeliſt Luke Chap.* 18: 24,25. And though our bleſſed Maſter expounds his own words there, and that theſe are not inconſiſtent; even for ſuch as are rich to be ſaved, ſince *nothing is impoſſible to God*, yet does it moſt clearly ſhew, theſe are rare, and great inſtances of an infinit power; yea that the world, and a large ſhare thereof is ſuch a let in the way, as we may ſee it ſome thing extraordinary, with ſuch a load of the earth for any to get through the ſtrait & narrow gate, which is indeed as the *needle eye*, without ſubduedneſs &

mor-

mortification. 2. We ſee a dreadful woe denounced againſt ſuch *Luke* 6: 24. *Woe to you that are rich, for you have received your Conſolation*; and how theſe torments of the rich man shewed *Luk.* 16: 19. are conjoined by Chriſt himſelfe there, though in a parable, with a having *received his good things here in this life*; and though he graciouſly allowes his people the comfortable uſe, & enjoying of their outward lot, though the convey of theſe true and greateſt comforts, which are ſpiritual, is oft in the way of the Croſs, yet is that ſad mark by the holy Ghoſt put on others, *Jam.* 5: 5. *They have lived in pleaſures, and nourished themſelves as in a day of ſlaughter.* That it ſeemes matter of aſtonishment how men live under any awful regard of the Scripture, if a large intereſt in the earth be not ſome cauſe of fear and dread. 3. And is not mens eager love & deſires after the world, a Scripture ſigne and mark of a reproabat State? *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world, if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*, 1 *Joh.* 2: 15. And that ſad note put on the Covetous man, *Pſ.* 10: 3: *That he is the man whom the Lord hateth*; yet oh how rare a ſight is riches this day & without love, immoderat deſires, & a ſetting of the heart thereon? 4. That ſuch eager deſires, when men *will be rich* is ſo expreſly shewed in the Scripture, to be the very ſcent and path that leads down to death, *and a being drowned in eternal perdition*, 1 *Tim.* 6: 9. and the cauſe thereof held forth, that native tendency this hath to *a falling into many foolish and hurtful luſts.* And is not *the carnal mind enmity to God*, yea every length and advantage this gaines, ſo much further does men ſtand in a direct contrariety and oppoſition to God. 5. Though ſuch do bleſs themſelves in their heart, and are looked on with envy by others; what a dreadful mark doth the holy Ghoſt put on theſe; with a Call unto all to conſider the ſame. *Whoſe eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, and have more than heart can wish, and are not in trouble as others, Loe theſe are the ungodly that proſper in the world*, Pſ. 73: 11, 12. yea, are thus ſet a part with that ſad deſignation, *that they*

are

are men of this world, whose portion is in this life, they are full of sub-stance, &c. Ps. 17: 14. oh is it not cause of fear, that where the world hath got mens heart it is a sad evidence, they have got it for their *portion*? 6. Where riches is given, is it not upon *trial*, yea one of the greatest; which men can have, to keep them under some weight and exercise, more than the most searching cross; since it is clear, the more interest any thus have, it adds so much to their *talent*, which is not theirs, but committed under trust, of which every one must be countable according to their measure, *Matth.* 25: 15. *Luk.* 19: 15. and will ere long hear that awful call, *Come, give an account of your Stewardship*, *Luke* 16: 2. which will be found another thing, as to a faithful improvement of that measure, than seemes by most to be either believed, or laid to heart. 7. And is there an other way leads unto life, than the *strait and narrow way*, yea nothing more dangerous, than to be entangled with riches, honour, or pleasures? it is utterly impossible to *serve God and mammon*. And is it not one of the most difficult steps of a Christian, and rarest victories he gets, 1 *Joh.* 2: 10. *This is your victory, whereby you overcome the world?* When the native tendency thereof is so discerneably to take the heart off God, and savouring spiritual delights, to pull down ward, and make a sensible interposition betwixt heaven & the soul; to goe betwixt us and the better part, yea to deprive men of that blessedness in another world. 8. Besides such expres testimonies of the Scripture, which are so full, clear and peremptor, as all may see what a *beacon* the holy Ghost hath put on this *rock* in a special way; can any thing be more visible through the various changes of this life, how mens interests in the world tends to load more, than to satisfy: and yeilds eth least when it is most pressed; how rare these are, who are not in some measure discontent with their lot, and find the best of outward things in their hand are not that, which they seemed to be at a distance. Yea what can the furthest delights of riches amount to, beyond the present time; where

no comfortable reckoning can be on what is gone, for we are truely dead to what of our life is here past, and no possible security for one day or hour, of what is to come.

SECT. 6. IT is undeniable, how much the recovery of the life and power of Religion lyeth this day at the doore of the *Ministery of the Church*, as a special subservient mean thereto, and what neer andundoubted connexion this in all times hath with the thriving of the Gospel in any particular Church. I know, there wants not an horride party in this time, whose work is to decry, and cast reproach on that excellent office and appointment of Jesus Christ, which he hath given as a perpetual standing ordinance for his Church to the end of time: But it's not *Ministers*, but their great *Master*, whose they are, and *holdeth the Stars in his right hand*, against whom they appear herein; and though there want not such in all times, yea remarkeably at this day, than whom none do more obstruct the interest of the Gospel, and counteract the very end of this great office, in a sad opposition of themselves to the Truth and Power of Godliness, and wound in stead of healing, yea handle the Word of the Lord deceitfully, by accommodating it to their private interest and designe in a corrupt application thereof, which is not more sad, than we may find foretold, and the Church expressly forwarned in the Word, of such: Yet I judge this comes not under debate with all, who own the truth, that there are, I desire to hope, not a few *Ministers and Watchmen in the Church of Christ*, whose greatest aime and study is, to be found faithful to their *Masters* interest, and have a weight of that work on them, without respect to any outward encouragement; yea that such are in truth, and not in a shew *Ministers of the New Testament, of the*

Spirit, and not of the Letter. O what a promiſing evidence and door of hope were this to the preſent time, or any particular Church, when ſuch a Miniſtery is given of the Lord, of whom that account can be given.

1. That they diſcerne the times, ſo as to be deeply affected with the appearances of judgment.

2. Who live much under another weight, than the diſcharge of Miniſterial duties, or following that which is publick before men, in ſome ſerious exerciſe of Spirit, about their own perſonal caſe; otherwiſe, how ſad and heavy were it to be inured with practical truths, without a neer and feeling converſe therewith upon their own ſoul. And as it is a great thing for a Miniſter to be ſaved; ſo, to be preſſed in the trial of Converſion, and the work of Sanctification on his own Spirit, no leſs then in preſſing it on others; yea *with fear and trembling to work out their Salvation*, who thus ſtand accountable upon ſo great a truſt committed to them.

3. That their great Scope in preaching is ſtill to lead into the *Goſpel*, and to have all their Doctrine, and holding forth of duties thus pointing, with a clear tendency to *Jeſus Chriſt*, and for an airthing the hearers into him.

4. Such, whoſe preſſure and continued exerciſe on their Spirit is, how their Miniſtery may tend to their *Maſters* praiſe and exalting, what ever entertainment they ſhould meet with from men. And it is ſure, there is a ſhining in humility, with a much more convincing luſtre than in gifts; yea, it is everſeen, that the *humbleſt Preachers* have been moſt inſtrumental to convert others, and not the moſt eloquent or poliſhed, who never knew brokenneſs of heart, and ſome weight of their own inward caſe.

5. Such

5. Such, who are kept with much serious dependence on the Lord in their duties. It was the saying of a choice Minister of Christ, that he never came off with less comfort and more discontent with himself, than when to appearance he was best provided, not because of his diligence, for being thus prepared, since that was his duty: But because he was then aptest to neglect dependence on the Lord.

6. Whose great and most weightie part in the Ministery is to *live Religion*, more then how to discourse thereof; to whom preaching is not the heavieſt part of their work, nor a going about duty upon the matter, as to have their principle herein right, for that only abides, which is done for the Lord, and will have a true income of solide peace and joy. Such is the impression on the wax, as it is on the seal; and it is sure, where that holy fear and love to Jesus Christ hath a deep engraving on our heart, it will make a suteable impression on our duties.

7. I must adde that, which hath so neer and clos a connexion with the fruit and success of the Ministery in all times, a serious study to have this followed *in secret prayer, and wrestling before the Lord*, no less than in publick appearances; when it is so undeniable. 1. To be a fruitful and lively Minister can be no more, than what the Lord does make him hourely to be, and needs a new influence of the blessing for every new piece of his work. 2. That it is not the furtheſt advantage of gifts, or the most polished discourse, but the Spirit of the Lord, that makes this great service for the Church, successful; yea that it must be another key than moral swasion, can open the heart of the Hearers. 3. That a lively frame, and to have their work prepared within, by some serious impressions of the truth on their own Spirits, is found one of the most sensible advantages, both to himself and others, that a Minister goes forth

with in any publick appearance: Not but that a serious ſtudying of what is to be delivered in the matters of God, is a neceſſary duty: But O! what a promiſing token ſhould it be for better times to the Church, and ſome recovery of the wounted life and power of Religion, which was formerlie ſo diſcerneable; when the publick work of preaching is thus carried on with much of that preparatory work of Secret *Prayer*, the want whereof make oft ſuch weak preaching, even with the moſt viſible advantage of gifts and humane eloquence. And I muſt here add, how this weighty duty lies upon the hearers of the Goſpel, as well as Miniſters, who have any reſpect to the Kingdome of Chriſt, to help forward the publick work by ſecret prayer; whence ſuch advantage of an open doore for the word is found in ſome places more than in others, where there is a ſerious people to entertain it, and hath the publick work, as well as their private caſe much on their heart.

Sect. 7. In ſo remarkeable an hour of trial now on the Church, what a bleſſed and hopfull mean might this be, to ſee a more *neer correſpondence, and unite concurrence about the work of the Lord, not only amongſt Chriſtians themſelves: but particular Churches*; with ſome ſerious enquiry and ſearch, what may be the provoking cauſe of this ſad over clouding darkneſs now over the *Reformed Churches*, after ſuch manifeſtations of the power and brightneſs of the Goſpel to our fathers. Oh, how ſad a want is this in time of ſo eminent hazard, that almoſt there is none found to ſtand in the breach, but *every ones hand on his loines*, and no ſtirring, or eſſay for ſome unite ſtriving together, and *contending for the Truth once delivered to the Saints*, which is ſo great a truſt on the preſent generation, not for themſelves only, but poſterity, when ſo ſore a ruine is like to fall under our hand.

hand. I confess, it may seeme hopless to mention such a duty, when these impressions, as sometimes have been of this, are discerneably off the Spirits of most. But I am sure, these pressing arguments may be undeniable to enforce some conviction.

1. That the want of a publick Spirit hath put the most endeared interests of many to be as a butt of the holy indignation of the Lord & is the seen cause, why *many sow much, and bring in Little*, with such sad personal grievances and complalnts every where, even amongst the Professors of the Truth. *Hag.* 1:9. *why saith the Lord of Hosts, because of my house, which is waste and desolate, and every man runs to his own house.*

2. It is known, how singular a blessing hath followed some very hopless essayes and endeavours of a few in behalf of the Truth, when there has been a falling in upon the right lith of present duty, to keep it alive in a remarkeable hour of defection, yea, to effects above rational beliefe, and what surprising issue the improving a little strength, with sorest wrestling hathoft had, for the service of the Church and Generation.

3. Is it not now clear, what a remarkeable appearance is against the Truth, how *the enemy is like to break in as a flaud*, and the assault not from a private adversary, but from a publick, *unite*, and *formidable* combination this day from the *Romish party?* And Oh! are we fallen into such a dead Lethargy, not to be awaked to some more unite concurrence, upon that great interest of the Truth, to know the condition we are in, for mutual sympathy and upstirring to the duties of the time, for communication of Counsells, and promoting further onness of heart amongst such, with whom the things of Christ have any weight.

4. We see in these suffering, and truely flourishing times after the Reformation, with what seriousness and

advantage it was followed for mutual intercourſe, & being concerned in the publick caſe and concernes of the Church, and Chriſtians amongſt themſelves. What a grave enquiry was then, what tenderneſs and ſympathy amongſt the followers of the Lord, when they knew but at a diſtance the ſuffering lot of their friends? yea with what deſire and longings to know the ſucceſs of the Goſpel, and what further intereſt it did gain any where? But Oh! now moſt ſeeme to be only minding their own things, and how to ſecure a private intereſt, to whom theſe words may have a ſad and dreadful ſound: *Eſther.* 4: 13, 14. *Think not with they ſelf, that thou ſhalt eſcape more than all the* Jewes, *for if thou holdeſt altogether thy peace at this time, then ſhall there enlargement and deliverance ariſe to the* Jewes *from another place: But thou and they fathers houſe ſhall be deſtroyed.* Some may have an advantage and opportunity for improvment of themſelves beyond others in behalf of the bleeding intereſts of the Church; & I have confidence to ſay, that any ſuch ſerious aime once followed ſhould be the way both of their ſtrength and encouragement, and to know that an enlarged heart for the intereſt of Chriſt, will never want a large allowance.

FINIS